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# SCIENTIFIC BASKETBALL

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DEDICATED TO MY BROTHERS



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## INTRODUCTION

**I**N RECENT years the game of basketball has made tremendous strides. From the sport of a mere handful of people in the public schools and gymnasiums of the Young Men's Christian Association, basketball has progressed rapidly both in the nature of the game and in the interest which it has provoked among the sport-loving public, until today it occupies the position of the most popular indoor game on the winter program. Thousands upon thousands of young men and women in the schools, colleges, play-grounds, and athletic associations have adopted basketball whole-heartedly while innumerable amateur and professional teams are engaged annually thru the winter months in private and organized competition.

Whether this increased interest in the game has been the result of the compulsory athletics prescribed at the army cantonments during the war or the wider activities of the Amateur Athletic Union and the Western Conferences and Intercollegiate Leagues is difficult to say. Suffice it to say, however, that basketball has come to stay. Combining the aggressiveness and team-play of football, the speed and fascination of ice-hockey and the grace and skill of baseball, this splendid indoor game has within the short span of a half dozen years reached a state of popularity where ten thousand people will gather to witness a single contest on the court.

But so radical a development in the size of its public, players and spectators, cannot attend a sport without an accompanying change in the nature of the game. Every activity in which man engages in sufficient numbers undergoes periodic evolutions. Baseball is a vastly different game today and is played in a decidedly superior manner than it was a generation and a half ago. A spectator of a football match a generation ago would hardly recognize in the grid-iron game of today the same pastime which he had witnessed at the beginning of the twentieth century. So also has basketball changed with time though not perhaps in quite as large a measure.

Within recent years the tendency has been to eradicate the rougher elements of basketball. As a result, dribbling, which not so long ago played a prominent part in a team's offensive play when players were permitted to turn, change their direc-

tion any number of times, and still maintain possession of the ball, has diminished considerably in importance to basketball players under amateur rules. The limitations placed upon dribbling worked not a little change in the entire character of the game. It tended to decrease appreciably the amount of individualism in players which still pervades the professional game of basketball where promiscuous, two-hand dribbling is permitted, and to direct the primary elements of the game to passing and concentrated team-work. Wherever basketball is played today, emphasis is laid principally upon co-operation and organization of team-play for the better interests of the whole. Coaches aim to develop combinations which will work as smoothly as well-oiled machines. If a team is so fortunate as to possess a sensational shooter, the offensive of the machine is planned so as to enable that player to function to best advantage. Individual playing, rash, indiscreet dribbling, and aimless, indiscriminate shooting have yielded to organized, concerted action.

With the increasing interest in basketball as the game advanced in years came a wider experimentation in different styles of play. Where leagues and tournaments are formed and championship series for cups are played, teams invariably make an annual house cleaning. Reviewing their record and making comparisons, they manage to find that in this manner their defense was inefficient, that by use of other formations their offense might have been strengthened, and generally invent new systems or experiment with those essayed by other teams. The game has consequently advanced. With every season it has grown more scientific, more complex, and more difficult to master. On the offensive, teams have attempted systems built around dribbling, others around long distance shooting and wholesale following up of shots; some have specialized in the long passing game; others have made use of no special system whatever but have relied upon individual strength. But in general the tendency of late has been to develop the short, conservative passing game.

Concerning styles of defensive play there have been even wider differences of opinion and greater experimentation. Many have advocated and made use of the "zone" defensive; some the "first man thru" system; others have believed in taking one's nearest unguarded opponent. In recent years, the system which has rapidly gained in favor is the five-man style of defense in which each player is responsible throughout the game, with but few exceptions, for the guarding of his opponent. The five-man game has always been in use in

professional circles and has only recently come over to the amateur class where it has met with only mediocre success owing to lack of experience and capable teaching.

It seems inexplicable at first consideration of the subject why the amateur basketball player, as represented on the college and larger athletic club teams, is so much inferior to the man who makes the game of basketball a profession. We occasionally witness the graduation of a college baseball star right into the ranks of the Big Leagues and also note that the majority of the professional football elevens are recruited from amongst college stars of the so-called All-American calibre. This sort of thing does not exist in basketball. I have never seen a college player in all my years of association with collegiate basketball who has had the ability, the polish, the experience required of a successful professional player. A great many collegiate court stars have the potential ability of great basketball players, but at the very height of their amateur game they seem to lack the fundamental groundwork which professional men carry on to the court with them.

I do not mean to stress the professional game because of any conception of a superiority of that game over amateur basketball, which would not be true if I did think so, but merely to point out that the highest possibilities of basketball have not been exhausted in amateur circles whereas the professional player has developed his game to a greater degree of perfection. There are several reasons which may be advanced to explain this phenomenon. The first, and perhaps the most important of these reasons, is founded upon the commercial element of the professional game which requires that a player be just so much better than the next man, or at least his equal, to retain his job. This factor tends to induce in each conscientious player a closer analysis of his game. It leads him to seek pointers from older and more experienced men. He carefully scrutinizes the styles and practices of the stars. In his subsequent games he attempts to put those new ideas into his own game, to experiment, to improve. The professional basketball player is consequently a far better defensive man than the amateur. He must prevent his opponent from outscoring him in order to keep in the game, and therefore seeks every possible pointer which will increase his efficiency. It leads him to study his opponent more carefully and in less time than the college player who lacks the experience and training. He is quick to take advantages and careful not to repeat mistakes. He must do all these things because it is his livelihood, his business, his profession. One



may inquire why a college trained football team is so nearly on a par with the professionally-trained eleven while the college basketball team lags so far behind the professionals. The answer is that basketball is not considered important enough to give the time and attention and the study which football receives.

Another important factor to the advantage of the professional player which makes him a so much more capable performer than the college man is the matter of competition and experience. In the height of the basketball season, from December to March, the average professional player of any ability is engaged in about four games each week. Some of the better players, the stars, whose services are in demand by many teams, often play every night in the week. This constant competition against men of one's own calibre or better, this almost daily practising of new tricks and moves and pointers in actual competition, has a most advantageous effect upon a man's game. The college player goes through his daily routine practice against the scrub team which is often composed of an inferior group of players who give the varsity little opposition of any beneficial nature. As the result of his great number of cage battles, the professional gains in both confidence and experience and consequently improves his game. The college player as a rule engages in but one match a week or two at the most, and spends the rest of his days in the season practising on his own gymnasium floor. Of course there is no way of remedying this situation, nor do I suppose there is any desire to do so because it would be impracticable and undesirable for college men to be competing so often. I merely mention this fact, however, to point out one of the reasons for the disparity in ability of the average players of these two classes.

College basketball, it seems to me, has been greatly retarded in its development by the general prevalence of incompetent coaches. I hesitate to mention this fact because I myself am a member of this class of citizens, but the importance and the truth of it have been brought home to me so clearly on so many occasions that I feel it is deserving of mention. Until recent years, the average basketball coach was recruited from among former college stars whose records as members of undergraduate teams earned for them glowing reputations. Without having had any subsequent training or experience these men have attempted to instruct players in the fine points of the game and develop successful combinations. It stands to reason that a coach can impart to his players no more than

he himself possesses and can give them the advantage of no more experience than he has himself gained, and therefore if we can accept with any belief as to the accuracy the facts in the previous paragraphs concerning the limitations of the ability of the college basketball player, the conclusion must be that generally the coach whose sole experience lies in his knowledge of and acquaintance with college basketball as it has until now been played, is not the best prepared man for the position. Fortunately the larger institutions have lately begun to engage men of wider, superior experience to handle the destinies of their basketball teams. If the amateur atmosphere can exclude the commercial elements of the game which men of such training are apt to introduce, I believe that the science of basketball will be immeasurably benefited thereby.

The foregoing diagnosis of the condition of basketball today is by way of emphasizing the need of a more thorough discussion of the finer points of basketball. A perusal of the pages of the following chapters will show that this book is intended not so much for the beginner as for the high school, college, and professional players who have already had some experience at the game. There are any number of treatises on basketball which are of a very elementary character. After explaining what the game is all about, how the teams line up on the court, how goals are scored, and other phases of the game for beginners, they invariably set out to instruct the reader "How to play forward," and "How to play guard," and "How to play center." The game of basketball, however, has progressed too far for such elementary treatment of the subject. The styles of play have changed considerably within recent years so that it is no longer necessary to write upon the subject of "How to play forward" or the other positions. With the present five-man defensive, of which I am an advocate, there is very little difference in the function of any man on the team after the ball has been tossed up at center, so that on the offensive practically all five players have an equal share in the attack and on the defense all five men are converted into guards. We have also noticed a tendency in recent years to pay close attention to the fine points of the game and at the same time have realized the general incompetence of the amateur team coaches to instruct players in those points. All of these factors, which have become more evident to me each year in my association with college basketball teams, have prompted the writing of this volume on "Scientific Basketball."

I have attempted within these pages to discuss all of the important elements of basketball with which I have come in contact in my many years of experience as an amateur and professional player and as a coach of college teams. There may be opinions stated herein with which others may differ or take exception. People may have methods of execution which in their opinions are superior to the methods which I have attempted to describe. I do not expect every point mentioned to meet with the approval of every reader because I realize that many of the things stated are merely matters of personal opinion. If, however, a few of those who read this work are able to extract some stray bits of advice which will enable them to better their game, I shall feel that whatever time and energy was put into the compiling of this book was well worthwhile.

NAT HOLMAN.



## HANDLING THE BALL

**B**ASKETBALL is primarily a passing game. It has long since ceased to be a game of distance shots and rapid following up. Had basketball remained in that state where individual accuracy and brilliance at basket shooting were its important attraction the game would never have reached the popularity which it maintains today in the world of sport. It is the fascinating sensation experienced by players and spectators as the result of team-play built around combinations of fast and accurate passing players which has helped basketball to gain and to hold the public so readily.

The ability of individuals to locate the basket from long distances has not been the cause of the growth in popularity of the game nor is it the reason, on the whole, for the success of basketball teams. A well-organized passing team generally appears nearer the head of the league than one composed of players whose superiority lies in their basket shooting. Men who are able to pass well, play together consistently, and merge their individual abilities in that of the team seldom fumble and usually play better ball and achieve better results than aggregations of "shooting stars."

Why then is a fast short-passing team the most dangerous of them all? It is simply because these rapid-firing passes put every member on the team in motion. No one is at a standstill. Players breaking towards the ball naturally lessen the distance of the pass, increase the number of passes, and necessitate increased speed in handling the ball. This rapid change of positions with the proper handling of the ball tends to confuse opponents and break up their defense. In this constant shifting, too, often a defensive player is unintentionally blocked out of play, as the result of which a member of the offense is given the opportunity to break into an unguarded position with the possibilities of a free attempt at goal. Furthermore, the short passing game naturally leads to the development of a close formation which may be used very successfully in drawing opponents to a certain section of the floor and thus free a team-mate for an open pass or shot. No type of play is more effective for freeing a man under one's own basket than that of quick short passes. Most defenses will crack under this type of play. Also short accurate passing in the middle of the floor tends to draw the

defense up close and then allow an offensive player to cut for the basket. With this style of playing there is also a very great tendency on the part of players on the defense to hold, to block, and to commit other fouls.

The importance of having a player come toward the ball when it is passed to him cannot be overemphasized. Very often the ball is intercepted when a pass is made to a man who is waiting or is moving in the opposite direction. Of course, if a player has broken away from his opponent and calls for a pass under his basket it would be absurd to expect him to draw out from the basket so as to go forward to meet the ball. It is of particular importance that players keep in motion and charge in the direction of the pass when a team is in the process of "freezing" the ball. This matter will be pointed out in the discussion on "Freezing" in later chapters.



READY FOR A SHORT SNAPPY OVERHEAD PASS.

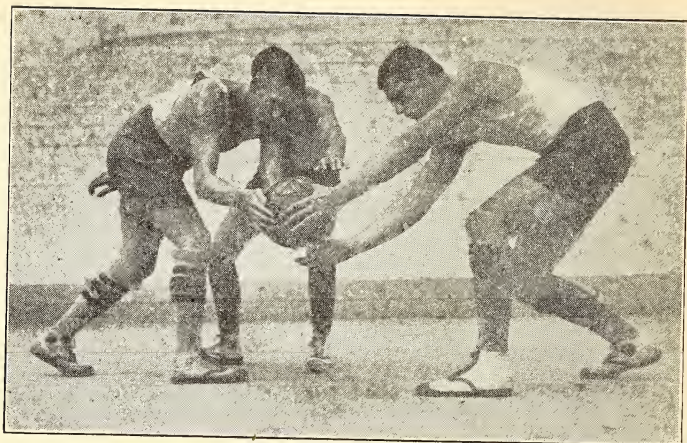
When a man is in possession of the ball and is manoeuvring about in close quarters, the speed of his passes should

be in accordance with the distance which separates him from his team-mates. If they are about ten feet away, a short, snappy, over-hand pass aimed at the pit of the stomach is most accurate and is easiest for his mates to handle. If they



AN UNDERHAND PASS AT CLOSE QUARTERS.

are two or three yards away and cutting rapidly towards him, let him twist his trunk slightly to the left or right, depending upon the direction from which they are approaching and slip the ball into the stomach, being on the lookout at the same time that an opponent coming toward him does not slap the ball out of his hand. Always on passes to a mate a player ought to make it his business to cut in between him and his opponent because there is a possibility that the passer's man will unintentionally block off one of his own men. Now then, when the ball is evenly passed into the hands of a player, he should be ready to swing the ball, from either left or right, with agility and speed together with a rapid feint (left or right) swinging the ball into palm of left hand as he feints left and vice versa if he feints to the right.



TWISTING OUT OF A CHARGE.

Another suggestion which is worth taking note of is that when a player is expecting to be charged after receiving a pass, he ought to twist his trunk in the direction opposite to that in which his opponent is charging and draw both arms slightly backwards while he is in possession of the ball and be ever ready to make a full turn if the opponent should come at him. I have seen many instances of alert players, while crossing from side to side on the defense, slapping the ball from the hands of an opponent who had just received a pass.

A player should be able to discriminate between a long and a short pass. An opportune time for the use of a long pass is when a player has an open run to the goal and the ball can be passed to a spot ahead of him, or when he is cutting in from an open corner uncovered. Furthermore, a player should not fail to keep going when he is on the run to receive a pass even if he is compelled to go off to a corner of the court. Some players have the tendency to cut for a certain angle figuring that when they receive the pass, they will be in an excellent position for a shot. That is good figuring, but if the pass is not thrown accurately, he should make every effort to catch the ball, instead of permitting it to roll out of bounds and thereby lose possession of it. Also, when the opponents are using the five-man defense with the guards being drawn up, an opportunity is offered for a team-mate to slip in behind the defensive guards and receive a long pass unmolested. Furthermore, if the opponents are slow in changing from offense to defense it is



quite possible for a team-mate to be uncovered in an open section of the floor near the goal.

In this connection with the subject I am reminded of Oscar Grimstead who in 1917 jumped center for the championship Utica team and who also played with Camden representatives of the Eastern League in 1921-22. Grimstead was a mighty good center but he will always be particularly remembered for his ability to intercept passes while on the defense. He was a clever rangy type of a fellow who could jump into the air and handle difficult passes. He seemed to be able, through watching the man who was in possession of the ball, to judge in just what direction the pass was going to be made. When competing against teams of tall men, one must be certain about making accurate passes.

Another useful pass is a bounce pass, which is very effective when teams are working at close quarters. If a player is going down the floor toward his own goal at a fairly rapid pass with the ball in his possession, a bounce pass to one of his mates who is directly opposite him, slightly to the right or left, will rarely be intercepted. A bounce pass should never be used when opponents are crowding in, because of the possibility of their rushing in and meeting the bounce. Time and again a player will find an opponent standing in front of him when he is about to make a pass. A snappy bounce pass to either the right or left side of him will prove most effective, provided the mate he is making the pass to is moving toward him or away from his opponent. The cleverest man I have ever seen at using the bounce pass to advantage is the diminutive star of the New York State League, Barney Sedran, who is a master at this style of game.

A rather dangerous pass is that which is made to a team-mate at the left side of the court when the passer is looking partly to the right side, or vice versa. It is a very deceptive pass and is seldom intercepted or blocked. Once the men on a team know a player's style, they will expect a pass of that nature when he is in possession of the ball. Marty Friedman, playing with the championship Albany, N. Y. State League Team, one of the greatest guards of the game, worked his blind-pass with wonderful results. It was most interesting to see the easy manner in which the pass was made; and yet there was plenty of snap, speed, and good direction to all of his passes. The advantage of the "blind" pass lies in the fact that the team-mates of one who uses that type of throw, expect it of him, are alert to

receive such passes, and are rarely, if ever, caught flat-footed; whereas opponents are never certain of the direction in which his passes are to be made, with the result that their chances of intercepting them are considerably limited.

When a ball is received waist-high, the proper manner in which to catch it is to permit the ball to strike the pit of the stomach with the body flexed slightly at the waist to prevent jarring. A player should not use his fingers if he can possibly help it. Most finger sprains are due to faulty handling of passes. If a pass is made high, the best way to receive it is (1) to make every muscle taut in the forearm to prevent fumbling, (2) to face the palm of hand in the direction of the ball and open fingers wide. One should take the pass away from the body and then draw-in just as it is received so as to relax the muscles in the arm.

Finally there is the 'one-arm catch-pass which many men use to good advantage. There are times when both hands are not available for receiving the ball and as a last resort, with rapid body adjustment, a player will catch a pass with one arm while slipping away from his man and click the ball to his body with a one hand clasp. These catches are spectacular but should not be used except when necessary. Many times the ball is lost because fumbling is frequent in making such catches. As a last means a player should use this one-arm catch-pass if he cannot place both hands on the ball. In this respect I recall Gil Schwab of the Wilkes-barre Club who was most spectacular in receiving a pass with one hand while on a cut for the basket on the left side of the court. When he reached the basket he would draw over to the right side, slip the ball into the opposite hand (left or right) steady it momentarily and shoot.

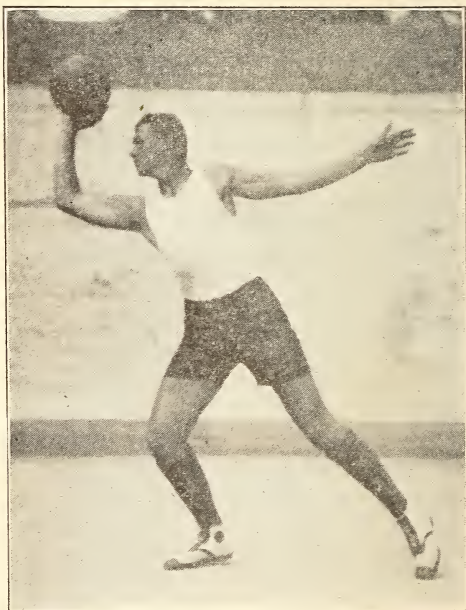
It was five years ago that I chanced to see Jack Inglis perform a feat that doubtless will never be duplicated in the realms of basketball. It was in an exhibition game played in Carbondale, Pa., when Inglis went down the floor at a terrific pace with me (playing with Bill Manning's All-Stars at the time) right at his heels, when Andy Suils made a pass to Jack across the floor about seven feet high. Inglis leaped into the air about six feet from the ground on the left side of the basket, took hold of the net in which we played, flexed his left arm, completely raised his entire body with the left hand, turned slightly to the right, and with the same motion clicked the ball passed to him by Suils with his right hand and shot a clean basket at the same time. There was I in the meantime waiting for this marvel to descend.

The only way I could have prevented him from shooting was by grabbing him by the ankles and drawing him down, but I never expected him to receive the pass having both feet off the ground and one hand in the net. My one wish when I left the floor that night was that every man and woman interested in basketball could have seen that play.

Jack Inglis handled a basketball with more grace than any man in the game. There were times when he would use a complete right hand pass around his back to a mate across the floor with great speed and accuracy. That pass was used when he was charged and no other pass would do. The men in the league who got to know his style used to prepare to intercept a pass of that kind. By and by Jack participated in a very important match and picked an opponent who was rated as an excellent guard. To the amazement of the crowd here is what happened. Inglis came down the floor on a run and when within three yards of his opponent drew the ball around his back with his right hand to deceive his opponent, clicked hold of the ball with his left hand and feinted left. He then snapped the ball back to his right hand and with a rapid feint to the right dribbled up to the basket without any opposition. This movement was executed within the twinkling of an eye. I have never seen such an exhibition of handling the ball as was played that evening.

## GOAL SHOOTING

THE three fundamental shots in basketball are the one-hand English shot, the push-shot, and the free throw. The one-hand push-shot is not used as much as the other two. It is used chiefly when an underhand or push-shot is impractical. This shot is shown in the accompanying illustration.



ONE-HAND ENGLISH SHOT.

You will note that the player's head is turned so that he is looking directly into the palm of his hand. This permits the proper English to be put on the ball. The fingers are spread to balance the ball perfectly and the ball rests flatly in the palm of the hand. The eye is focused at the center of the rim. Gauge the distance carefully and shoot by throwing the ball off gently, giving it the proper height.

I do not hesitate to declare that Dr. Lou Sugarman, who played forward on the Champion Greystock team of the



Eastern League in 1918 and later coached the Princeton University Basketball Team, is the most successful one-hand tosser the game has ever produced. Many a game has he broken up as the result of his uncanny ability to toss the ball in with one hand while in motion. Seldom does he use the backward pass, for his system has been adapted to clear shooting. I have seen Sugarman play and have played with him in many games, and through close observation I have noticed that in his cuts for the basket he draws off to one side after he receives the pass, twists his trunk a full turn left, sets the ball in his right hand with the left, and with the use of his fingers, wrist and arm movement, drops the ball into the basket.

The trouble with the average player is that when he is coming down the floor with great speed he cannot control the shot with accuracy. His shot generally lacks direction. It is thrown either too far or too short. Or it may be given too much or too little height. It may also lack the loop which is of great importance. The point which should be remembered most in connection with the **one-hand** shot is that the shooter should set the ball properly into the palm of the right hand with the left, glance quickly at the basket, measure the distance, note the center of the rim at the same time, and then lay it up with as little force as possible. No twist of "English" is necessary. Let him arch the ball with even height. The player should not fail to turn with the shot, facing the basket as the ball leaves his hand.

The only objection that I find to the one-hand shot is that it is a most difficult one to control and one runs the risk of losing possession of the ball in attempting it. I know of many players who are rated as wonderful shooters, but their shooting ability is out of proportion to their value to the teams on which they play. They are poor team men because they come down the court repeatedly, shoot at the basket from almost impossible angles, lose possession of the ball, and bring their entire team back on the defense again.

We often see amateur and professional basketball players who run at a fast pace and drop in a beautiful one-hand shot. It is a pretty shot and the maker of it deserves due credit for his performance. But these very men try the same shot four or five times, and sometimes more often, during the course of the game, perhaps carried off by the pleasurable sensation of having made such a shot and the hope of repeating it, with the result that possession of the ball is lost each time and their team suffers.

Dr. Al Sharpe, who coached the basketball team at Yale for several years, used a chart system with his men to correct their shooting faults. He used to sit up on the running track overlooking the court during the team's practice or league games and make note on a chart of the various shots taken by each player by checking their number in the zone from which their shots were taken. In this manner he was able to tell just who were trying the shots, how many they were taking, the angles and distances at which they were taken, and the percentage made and wasted. Soon each man took stock and tried to regulate his shooting by not making ridiculous attempts, with a subsequent improvement in his playing.

Another remarkable shooter was tall George Smith, who jumped Center for the Stamford Team of the Connecticut State League in 1917. Smith had the most unusual knack of shooting for the basket with either hand. He would choose between a left or right hand shot in accordance with the angle in almost any situation. If he was cutting in fast for the basket on the left hand side of the court with an opponent right up with him, even though the possibilities were present for a shot on the left side, he would swing around completely, shifting the ball at the same time from his left to his right hand and shoot at the basket from the right side. It was most interesting to see a man hanging on to George as he came down to the left side of the basket and suddenly watch him swerve to the right side with a flashing twist so as to deprive the opposing player even of the alternative of fouling him to prevent him from scoring a basket.

It is my opinion that the most successful way of shooting at a basket is to shoot clear and disregard the backboard entirely. Once a man can train his eye to see nothing but the ring as he looks at the backboard he is making rapid strides towards improving his shot. The game of basketball has been likened to the game of billiards, with the backboards as cushions and the fingers of the player the cue. The same skill employed in using the cue successfully is employed in handling a basketball. I feel that a great many shots are made off the backboard mainly through assistance of the backboard and with very little aim or concentration on the part of the shooter.

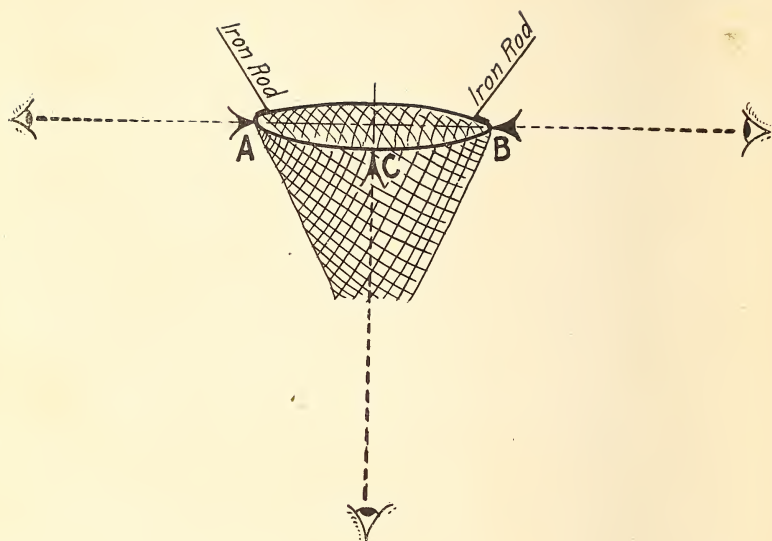
As a man travels about with his team to play on various courts he is apt to meet with backboards of different resiliency. Some are fast, others are dead. Then again there are baskets which have the iron rod extending out from the backboard from twelve to fourteen inches, making a

backboard shot quite difficult. As long as a player has to put up with such conditions he will never be at a disadvantage if he is able to shoot clear baskets. By all means I advise the use of the backboard when one is going under the basket for a shot but it is in shooting outside of the foul line that I urge the development of clear shooting.

The question the average basketball player should ask himself is "What if the Rules Committee change the rules of the game and abolish the use of backboards entirely?" This change actually occurred fifteen years ago, when the professional teams announced their plans to the public. Today the "pro" game is played in a taut net with no outside balls called, and with a basket consisting of a strong base iron upright and a twelve to fifteen inch rod projecting out from this upright with a basket attached at the end. There is often no backboard. The ball is kept in play for twenty minutes within the net and only during a "time-out" are the players at rest.

Now then, what is the most effective method of shooting clear baskets? On page 22 is a diagram which I have used in discussing this subject with college men. I have emphasized the method of dissecting the rim and getting the center, regardless of what one's angle may be. If a player is certain of that, his direction of shooting will always be good. He will soon find, as I have experienced through close observation in my own shooting, and also in the results shown through practice by the various men under my tutelage at college, that a greater percentage of shots will find their mark than heretofore.

Whenever a player receives a pass near his basket in the corners of the court, to enable him to gauge the center of the rim I suggest that he glance immediately at the supporting rods which terminate in the center of the ring. The same should be done from the center of the court, although from that position there are no projecting rods to assist the eye. However, through practice and intense concentration it is possible to train the eye so that at first glance a man can with reasonable accuracy strike his objective. The real difficulty lies in being able to set one's self as fast as the situation permits when one comes to a sudden halt so as to gauge accurately. Within a fraction of a second a player must measure his distance, set the ball properly, and study the height of the curve. Of course when he is shooting a foul, he is at ease; and glancing at the rim, he ought to have no trouble in locating the center of the rim.



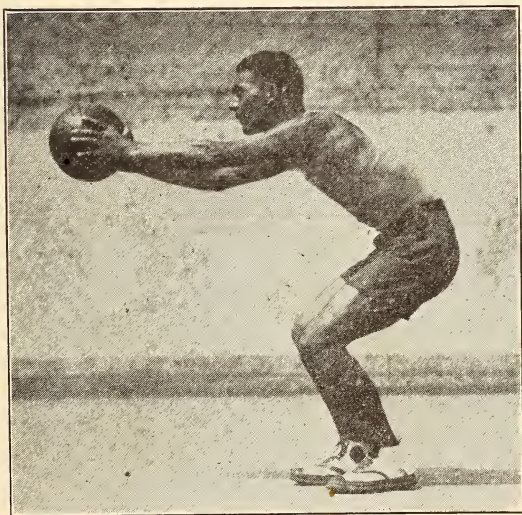
THE EYE DISSECTS THE RIM.

In the use of the ordinary push-shot, the ball should never be allowed to rest against the palms. In throwing a stone or baseball, the object is held in the finger tips. This gives the "zip" to the baseball or the "snap" to the push-shot in basketball. By using the finer accessory group of muscles instead of the heavier or fundamental groups, the player gets a much better coordination. A push-shot should be directed on a high curve and not on a line or with a low arch. For the underhand or free throw shot, the ball is held in identically the same position as it is when a free throw shot is attempted.

There are two ways of making the push-shot and these are illustrated on pages 24 and 105. The former is the method which I advocate and have myself adopted for my own style of shooting. On page 105 one will notice that the body of the shooter is almost erect and the ball is raised slightly above the level of his eye so that it is almost on a direct line from his eye to the basket. Players employing this style of shot usually raise the ball with or without a twist and give it a high arch.



I would suggest the following preparatory move for a push-shot. Just as soon as the player receives the ball, let him advance one full step forward with the right foot, bring the left up close to the right, actually clicking the heels, and extend both arms outward about waist high and parallel with the ground. Place all the weight on the toes, and bend the trunk slightly forward. The ball is adjusted properly, through the sense of touch, and it is revolved quickly so that when it leaves the hand it will rotate with the stitches facing upward. Practice will give a man that sense of touch so that in a very short time he can snap the ball into the proper position rapidly. With eye on the basket during this act, the player should locate the center, measure his distance from the basket, and give the ball the proper elliptical arch.

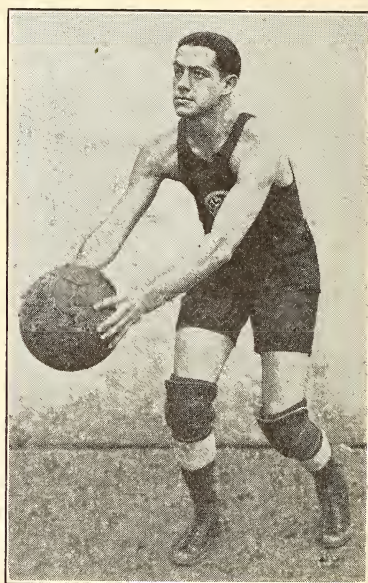


SET FOR A PUSH SHOT.

Good "foul" shooting depends entirely upon muscular relaxation and intense concentration. After working about the floor when my team has possession of the ball, cutting in for the basket, dodging, feinting, etc., I have found it extremely advantageous, to walk up to the foul line, when a foul is called, relax physically, and concentrate on the center of the rim until the ball leaves my hands. If a foul shooter rivets his eyes on the center of the rim, disregards com-

ments made by players and spectators from the side lines, and maintains a feeling of confidence (inwardly saying to himself, "Oh, this one is a sure point. Chalk it up, Mr. Scorer!") before long he will find himself shooting fouls with a degree of accuracy.

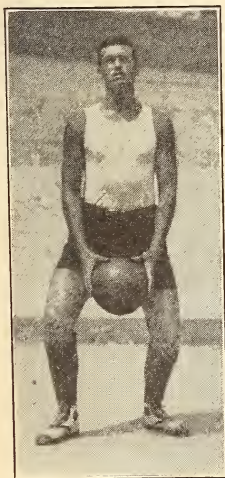
Good foul shooting requires endless practice. That holds good for any athletic or mental activity. I have taken hold of men on the Varsity basketball team at the College of the City of New York, where I am at present coaching the teams, and have made good foul shooters of them because of their willingness to learn and to spend the time in daily practice.



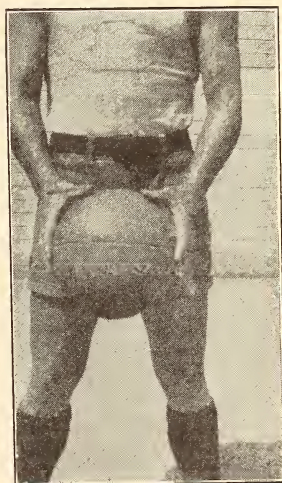
OVERHAND FREE THROW.

There are a number of ways of taking a position at the foul line. Whatever style a man adopts, let him be consistent, practice that one method alone, and bear in mind the matter of muscular relaxation and concentration. For many years I have been shooting fouls with my right foot forward and my left about one-half step behind it. All of my weight is carried on my right foot, while the large toe of my left foot touches the floor slightly so as to give my body the

necessary equilibrium since my trunk is bent considerably forward. Both arms are extended forward, giving me the proper balance. Equilibrium of the body will unconsciously give one steadiness, which is a vital factor in shooting. I have been extremely reluctant to change my style, the over-hand free throw, to an under-hand free throw; but I do not hesitate to say that the latter is the better of the two because it lacks the tension which characterizes the over-hand throw. The under-hand shot is preferred to the push-shot as a more natural one for the reason that the shooter uses his flexors many more times than his extensors and he is surer of them. The arms naturally give at the sides and do not upset the balance or equilibrium, as raising the arms up to the shoulders does in shooting.



SET FOR UNDERHAND  
FREE THROW.



POSITION OF HANDS IN UN-  
DERHAND FREE THROW.

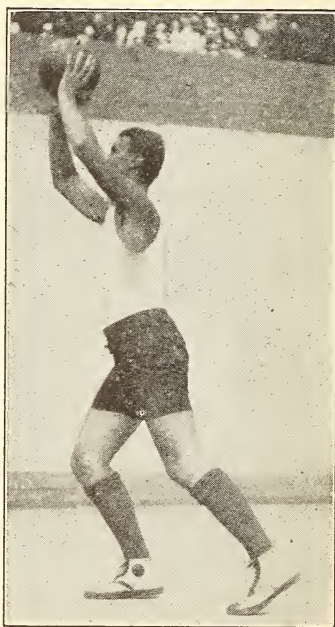
The player should approach the mark, take his position at the free throw line, keep looking at the basket, and stand with feet evenly apart. The shot itself is made by dropping the ball down from the waist line, using a quick quarter squat, and then bringing it directly upright. Just how much twist the player desires to put on the ball is determined by the amount of lift he gives it and the pressure he exerts in the release of it. The thumbs here play an important part in aiding the flexors toward the proper arch.



The elbows are kept fairly close to the side, and as the shooter squats, he drops his hands slightly downward with the thumbs out, and as he rises, reverses the movement with an upward twist, rising on the toes as he throws the ball off.

I do not advise the use of the under-hand shot in preference to the push-shot in the field of play because it is so much more easily blocked. The underhand throw is unsafe to use when an opponent is within ten feet and between the shooter and the basket.

Playing with Jim Furey's Original Celtics last winter against the Knights of Columbus Team of Fort Wayne,



THE OVERHEAD SHOT.

Indiana, I met a lad by the name of Stonebraker. "Stony" played forward and also shot fouls for the Knights of Columbus Team. He did his shooting with an under-hand shot. It was in the first game of this series that I, for the first time in my career, saw a player use the undershot as effectively as did Stonebraker. He shot five baskets that night from way past the mid-floor, in the most remarkable exhibition of under-



hand shooting that I have ever seen. Chris Leonard, who played opposite "Stony," being unaware of the latter's ability to shoot so accurately from so great a distance, let him shoot believing that he would miss his tries and lose possession of the ball. Chris missed his guess. The Celtics were beaten 24 to 17. The following night Leonard played Stonebraker again and actually prevented him from scoring a single basket. Leonard stood close to "Stony" whenever his side got possession of the ball regardless how far back the Fort Wayne Star went. The latter made many attempts at the basket but they were almost all blocked by Leonard, which proved conclusively to me that the underhand shot is not very effective when one is being played closely by one's opponents. The Celtics toyed with the Knights in this second game and defeated them by the score of 48-19.

Another most unusual shooter is Eddie Dolan, who jumped Center for the Camden Team, winners of the Eastern League 1920-1921. Eddie passed and shot his ball with both arms over his head. He would receive a pass from one of his men, somewhere near the foul line, and if the man playing him charged in, he would pass; but if his opponent waited for him to dribble through, he would shoot in this most deceptive manner. Dolan has a most uncanny ability for making baskets with this unusual style.

Finally, a player should remember that shots that are taken for the basket in a hurry lack direction and accuracy. Unless a man has sufficient time to get the ball away for a shot, he should refrain from shooting and wait for another opportunity.

The player should use his wrists in shooting by turning them upward with a sudden twist and arching the ball properly. Let him lean slightly forward and measure his distance.

## PLAYING THE OFFENSE

**A** BASKETBALL team's success depends almost entirely upon the strength of its offense. Regardless how good a defense it may have, if a team hasn't the ability to score baskets, it cannot win games. Likewise in baseball a team may have a wonderful battery and an excellent defense, but if it cannot score runs, before long it will be a tail ender in the race. True there are basketball games that are frequently won when players have exceptional luck at shooting baskets from all parts of the floor, but those occasions are rare.

The team that can by its team work get the ball down the floor to within good shooting distance is one that will head the percentage column. There are many different styles of offense in basketball, yet if a close analysis of all these were made, the same fundamental underlying principles would be found.

Possession of the ball is almost nine tenths of a basketball game, and the sooner the ball is obtained the better. Much naturally depends upon the center's ability to out-tap his opponent and a good deal also on the ability of the forwards to come in and take possession of the ball.

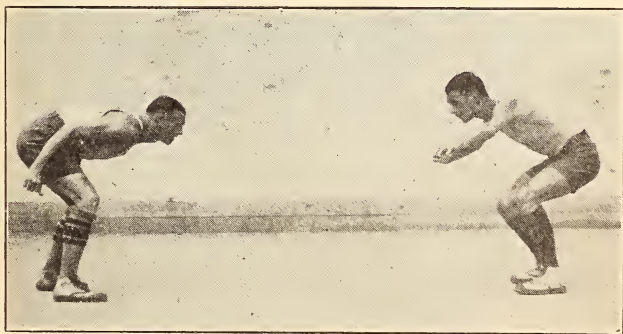
The second big factor is the speed with which the offense is started. It must be fast and under way before the opposing team has a chance to get set and to size up the situation. No matter whether the ball is started on an out-of-bound play from the opponents' backboard or from the center, the play should be fast. Great basketball teams fairly sweep their opponents from the floor with the speed which they carry into their play. There is no excuse for a team's wasting time after it secures possession of the ball. To get it down the floor to within shooting distance is their object and there should be no time wasted.

By getting the ball down the court quickly, I do not mean that the men should go down the floor on a wild dash. When players work that way, it is not long before they lose possession of the ball. They are likely to be caught with no one in the backcourt and be scored on. When a team takes possession of the ball, let it get moving, passing the ball to one another speedily and accurately, criss-crossing in order to make openings. Should any man cut loose and make a dash for the basket, his team-mates should be ready, if they have the ball, to feed him with an accurate pass.

It is a common thing to see a man cut for the basket with a three yard lead on his man while the men on his team fail to feed him. Nothing is more discouraging to a player than to draw away from his man, and, to his chagrin, find one of his own mates holding on to the ball in the backfield. It is not always the fault, however, of the man with the ball for not feeding him. When a player does break away, it is his business to yell as loud as he can. I can picture Johnny Beckman, who, as a member of the Original Celtics, is rated as one of the greatest forwards in the game, cutting away from his man and yelling at the top of his voice, while his right hand is raised to attract attention. No man on the Celtic Team or any other team that Johnny has played with would overlook him when he cuts for the basket. The fans used to mimic his cry, but the comments of the spectators never bothered Beckman. It is the business of the man with the ball to be ever on the alert to feed a man cutting-in. But a sudden cry will help him to determine immediately just what he should do with the ball.

One of the most important things in basketball offense is for players to break and run at the proper time. When the ball is moving about they ought to glance through the corners of their eyes to see whether the opportunity presents itself for them to cut for the basket. The trouble with too many men is that they have their eyes glued on the ball all the time. That may be a good thing, but men will never get away if they haven't the thought in their minds of cutting-in.

If a player finds that his opponent is playing him closely, let him back up about two to three yards. If he manoeuvres about with his opponent sticking closely to him, he may not



DISTANCE OF THREE YARDS NECESSARY FOR A GET-AWAY.

be able to outspurt him when he makes a dash for the basket. On the other hand, if he backs up about three yards as suggested and then starts on a run, with a rapid feint to the right or left, his opponent will have to be a very fast man to intercept the play. The theory is this: When a man is started on a run, the man playing him is standing still. The former has the start or the get-away, and that is all that is necessary to make a basket without being blocked or charged.

In coaching the City College Basketball Team I have termed the above play the "GIVE and GO." In practice the men enjoyed backing away from their opponents and making a sudden break for the basket, with a rapid left-right feint. If they found their opponents fleet-footed enough to cover them, they would come to a sudden halt, shoot to the side of the court and go to meet the ball to be ready for any other situation that presented itself.

Shifting and feinting play a very important part on the offense. A player who can outguess or shift away from his opponent is the type of man that must be watched closely. I refer again to Dr. Lou Sugarman who was one of the hardest men to contend with in this respect. He had the most unusual way of weaving his way through the defense. From the way he carried himself, one might have thought he was studying shadows, for he kept his head bent toward the ground watching his opponent's feet. "He certainly knows how to pick holes," was a common expression from the enthusiastic fans. One never knew how to figure Lou. He would back away from his man and suddenly make a dash for the basket with a rapid left-right or right-left feint. He feinted so well to the left, that his opponent would draw over to that side in the hope of stopping him and much to his surprise Lou continued the feint to the right. To fool his man on the next play Lou would come down the floor with his left-right feint and suddenly use a right-left feint. In baseball, this may be likened to what the pitcher calls "mixing them up" or outguessing his opponent. There were times when I saw Dr. Sugarman use a triple feint. He would give himself enough room to execute the feint and then come down the floor speedily, with a right-left-right feint. This movement was all done from the hips up, as he swayed his trunk with great rapidity right-left-right.

In writing of individuals the temptation is always to make comparisons. Is this man better than that one? What would the other have done on a stronger team? Regardless



of scores at the finish of a game Dr. Lou Sugarman, Johnny Beckman, and Barney Sedran are regarded great offensive players. They are wonderful and exceptionally fast men. They have physical power, stamina, good judgment, and foresight—characteristics which make good forwards. Brains, not brawn, make them superior to other offensive players.

On the offensive, a good player will not lose possession of the ball by taking long shots. If his team is behind by five to seven points and there is but a short time to play, then a long try is permissible. If the player with the ball is set and not too far back, let him shoot and follow the ball up after the shot. A drawback with many teams on the offense is that they have one or two good point scorers on the team and they expect them to do all the scoring. These men naturally will shoot every opportunity they have, irrespective of what their angle is or the distance they are away from the basket. If a man cannot get his shots directly under the basket, let him throw from the territory around the foul line. A long shot is hard to follow up, although it is the duty of the men nearest to the basket to follow the shot. On the other hand, shots taken around the foul line can be followed up with better results. If a man has the ball on the offensive and his opponent charges him, he ought not be satisfied with having a "held" ball called. Let him swing his body around, clinging to the ball in the meantime. If he can manage temporarily to retain possession of the ball by turning his body away from his opponent, he should then pass it back to one of his mates and start the play over again.

Francis P. Meehan, who jumped center for the German-



TURN AND PASS.

town Team of the Eastern League, used to work this play to perfection. Meehan was six feet four inches tall and was a wonderful help to a team, not only in giving them possession of the ball at the center play, but in assisting them on the offense under the basket with this play. Meehan would hurry down to his foul line, and turn with his back to his own basket. When he was in this position, his mates would make a high loop pass to him. He would then stoop forward, both arms stretched forward and outward and pass to his mates as they would cut in to the basket. If a team has a tall man jumping center for them, let them try this play on the offense.

Another added feature about the play was that if Meehan wasn't able to "feed" any of his men cutting-in for the basket, as would be the case when his mates were covered, he would swing around for the basket take one dribble and shoot.

Dribbling is often overdone. Just as soon as some players get hold of the ball they start down the floor with a dribble. Dribbling should be used as a means of advancing the ball down the field as a substitute for passing. The first and best means of advancing the ball down the floor is by SHORT PASSING.

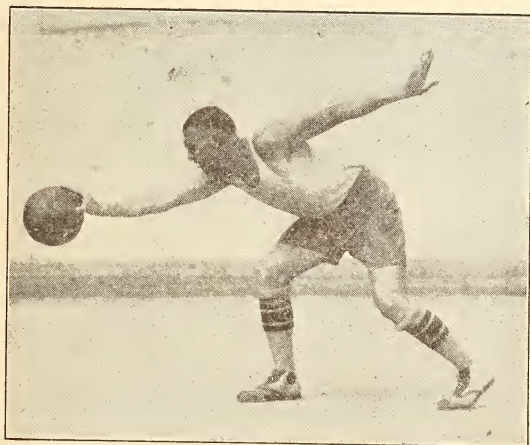
If a man with the ball finds that his opposing guard is waiting for him under his basket and he is somewhere in and around the center of the court, let him start off on a dribble if none of his mates are in front of him. During the course of this dribble he should be ever ready to come to a halt and feed one of his mates who may be coming down the floor at a fast pace. If he should overlook his mate by continuing the dribble, the chances are that he will lose an opportunity to score a basket, and secondly, he is apt to cause ill-feeling amongst his mates, because he is stressing individual playing instead of teamwork.

Whenever a team is playing on a long court, it is advisable to bring the ball up the field on a dribble instead of by passing. A good deal of strength will be used up by working the ball up the field, by passing and shifting from one side of the court to another. On the other hand, if one of the men has possession of the ball under his opponent's basket, one man should stay back to throw the ball in from the outside, and another to take the throw. In the meantime, the other three should hurry up the field, so that they can get in and around the foul line and cross from side to side.

The man that receives the pass from the outside, should start down the floor on a dribble at once, provided he is not covered. Very seldom will he be covered because his man will be waiting for him to come down the floor somewhere in the back-field. Then when he gets within reasonable distance, he should make a pass to one of his men and cut in at the same time. If he is going fast and the men on the team return the pass to him, nine times out of ten he will either make the basket or he will be fouled by one of the opposing guards.

The best time for dribbling is when a player receives a pass from one of his mates while going under the basket, assuming that he is ahead of his guard when he is cutting-in. He should not try to dribble by a man who is standing right in front of him. If the guard knows his business, he can slap the ball away without any trouble, and if he does not succeed on the first attempt he ought surely to be able to break up the dribble on the second attempt.

When one is dribbling one should **NOT LOOK SOLELY AT THE BALL**. If a player looks ahead instead of concentrating his attention on the ball he will be able to evade his opponents; he will not lose any time and will avoid over-

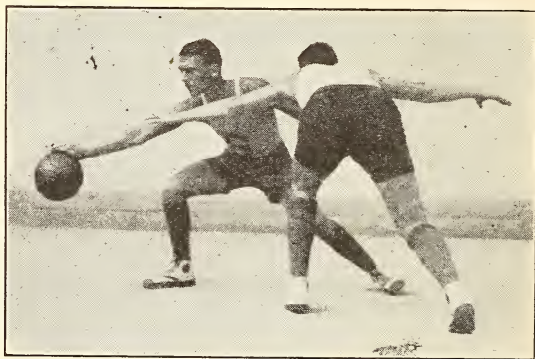


THE DRIBBLE.

looking some of his men cutting-in for the basket. A player should avoid dribbling high. If the dribbler keeps the ball about knee-high with his palm fairly well over the ball as he advances, he is then controlling the ball at the proper

height. A player must pay special attention to catching the ball first when it is passed to him rather than to stretching his hand forward to meet the pass and start the dribble immediately. Let him catch the ball first by tightening up every muscle in the forearm to expect a snappy pass, though the ball may appear to be traveling slowly toward him. He should not start the dribble before he catches the ball.

If when coming down the field on the offense the ball is passed to a man and his opponent is about to charge him, what is the best way to evade him? By shifting immediately to the right of his opponent, extending his right hand way to the side and taking a dribble at the same time. The

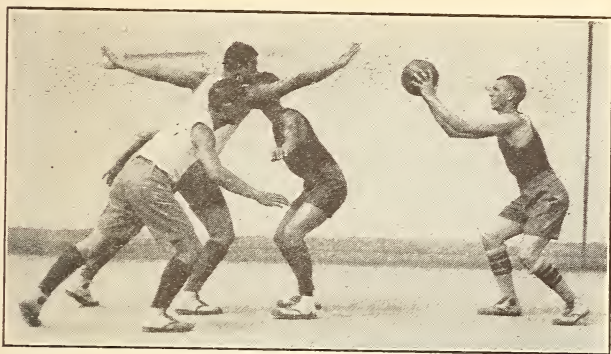


SHIFTING AWAY FROM AN OPPONENT WITHOUT ADVANCING.

player DOES NOT ADVANCE WITH THE BALL. He simply draws away to the side of his man. He can help matters by using a rapid left-right feint to make sure of the play. If a man can get this play down to a fair degree of perfection, he will seldom be bothered by charging or be drawn into unnecessary held-balls.

There are times on the offense when a man is so closely guarded that he is at a loss to know how to elude his opponent. Under such circumstances the following play should be tried. Let the player run directly in back of one of his team-mates who stands still to enable the former to get himself in line for a shot in the event the ball is passed to him. A brainy team can always bring such moves into play when up against strong opposition. If a team perfects this play, it will feed a player without loss of time, whenever he gets into this position and manoeuvres in back of a team-





PLAYER RUNS BEHIND TEAM-MATE FOR A SET SHOT.

mate for a shot. While standing in back there, if his opponent should run around to catch him, he can continue the circle and make a sudden cut for the basket when the opportunity presents itself. For this play some college teams are coached to have one tall man run down the floor and station himself near the foul line facing his basket while the rest of his team-mates hurry down the court passing the ball until one of the men can run up directly in back of him for a set shot.

This same idea of running around in back of your mates should be used also whenever a held-ball is called. Frequently players will stand by and just as the ball is thrown up by the official will run in to meet the ball as a forward does at the center play. Players should remember that when they are standing still and waiting for the ball to be tapped to them they are being covered by their opponents. It is then suggested that one man on the team run directly in back of



POSITION BEHIND TEAM-MATE AT HELD BALL.

his mate who is jumping at the held-ball, in an effort to get away from his opponent. If an opponent continues after his man, let the latter just keep going around in a circle about the two men who are jumping at held-ball. Before long the man playing against him will get tired of pursuing him and will stop at the point of vantage and wait for him to come down the field. It is at this point that the player should call for a back tap from the man who is jumping.

When a team has possession of the ball, its men should be on the move continuously. Players in motion are unconsciously making openings for their team-mates.

On outside balls, men ought to hurry the ball into the court. It is not a rest period. Most teams will be swept off their feet by a combination trained to snap the ball into play quickly from outside territory.

When a man wishes to make a pass from scrimmage to his mates going down the floor, it is suggested that he waste no time in looking for faces but throw for a man wearing the color of shirt that all of his mates wear.

If one member of a team has the ball on the right side of the court, the others ought to shift over to the left side. The reason for this is that one guard can cover two players in the same zone, which is impossible if they draw away to opposite sides.

Each player ought to do his individual thinking. He ought not to depend on others to lead the attack. If there is a chance at any time of his receiving a pass, he ought to ask himself such questions as "What am I going to do with it when I get it?" If he does so he will find himself one jump ahead of his opponents. Men should concentrate on their game just as checker players plan and figure their moves. Hence, after a pass they should ask themselves, "What next?"

After making a pass to a team-mate, one should immediately glance to the sides of the court to find an opening into which to rush.

A man dribbling down the floor should not overlook another man who may be in front cutting in from the side. It is every man's business to look for such opportunities to feed a team-mate.

A good offensive man will always follow up a shot whether it is taken by himself or any other member of the team. There are any number of guards who wait for the ball to come to them after it strikes the basket, while the

man following the ball will come in on a run, leap in the air, meet the ball, and shoot it into the basket. In the meantime, the guard stands there in amazement, realizing his mistake in not leaping for the ball. The most dangerous man under the basket that I know of is "Dutch" Denhart, who played with the Scranton Basketball Team, Champions of the Penn State League, now playing guard with the Original Celtics. "Dutch" is tall and rangy and has a wonderful physique. Although his position is that of guard, he always follows a shot taken by one of his mates. He comes in on a run, leaps high, and if he is in a position to shoot, does so; if not, he throws the ball back to one of his mates and starts the play over again. He realizes the value of having possession of the ball. Another outstanding feature about this player is that he knows just when to follow-up the ball. He uses strategy. For instance, if one of his mates takes a shot somewhere in and around the foul line, he follows-up by going around his opponent to the side, instead of charging into him and taking chances of getting bruised. He does this in such a manner that his opponent does not know whether he is drawing off to the side or just manoeuvring about for an opening to cut for the basket.

If a shot is taken on the right side of the court and a player is over on the left side, that is the time for him to go in and follow. It is better then for a man to go in from the same side as the one from which the shot is taken.

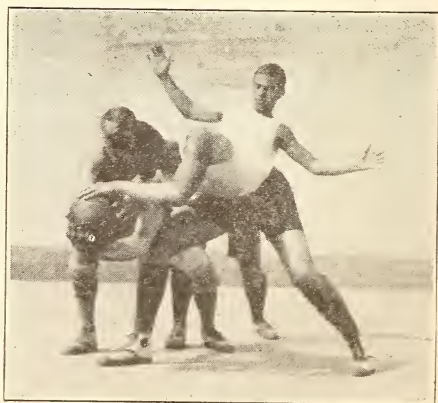
The final thought on playing the offense is *freezing the ball* to keep the ball from your opponents by passing it about you with the intention of "killing-time." This past season when City College played Princeton University, the home team was leading by three points, with but two minutes to go. There was a time-out! The boys decided to freeze the ball. When they resumed play, they passed the ball very carefully amongst themselves, every man on the team moving and cutting from side to side, and before they knew it, the whistle blew and the game was over with the ball in City College's possession.

The only possible way to freeze the ball is as follows:

Just as soon as one of the men gets possession of the ball, let him throw it back to one of the guards. Then have every man on the team move from side to side. It should be remembered that when a pass is made, the player receiving it must not fail to run towards the ball, for the pass may be intercepted. Long passes must not be used. If a player calls for a long pass, his mates should ignore him until he comes

forward to receive it. If his man is playing him closely, the ball ought not to be passed to him. A player should use his discretion because a single slip, a fumble, or a poor pass may cost his men the game. There are defensive teams that will not "close-in" when their opponents commence to freeze the ball, but will wait for them to advance down the floor. On the other hand, a team which knows its business will close-in immediately because there is so short a time to play. When a player's opponent begins to close-in on him, let him make a sudden sprint in the direction of the basket to lead his man to believe he is going in for a shot, then stop suddenly, turn, and go back to meet the ball. He will find that his man will not always follow him back as quickly as he pursued him in the sprint toward the basket. As soon as he receives the ball, let some other member of his team follow this operation. If at any time a man cuts for the basket and eludes his opponent so completely that a chance can be taken on feeding him with a high loop pass, that opportunity to increase the score may be taken. In "freezing" the ball, some men like to hold the ball because their opponents do not close-in on the play. I am not in favor of this because the player's mates are being covered all the time and some opponents, passing by, may slap the ball from his hands or rush him for a held-ball.

I recollect playing in an important match several years ago between Bridgeport and Danbury. "Chief" Muller, playing guard with the Danbury team, opposed Sedran of the Bridgeport team. Muller was much taller than



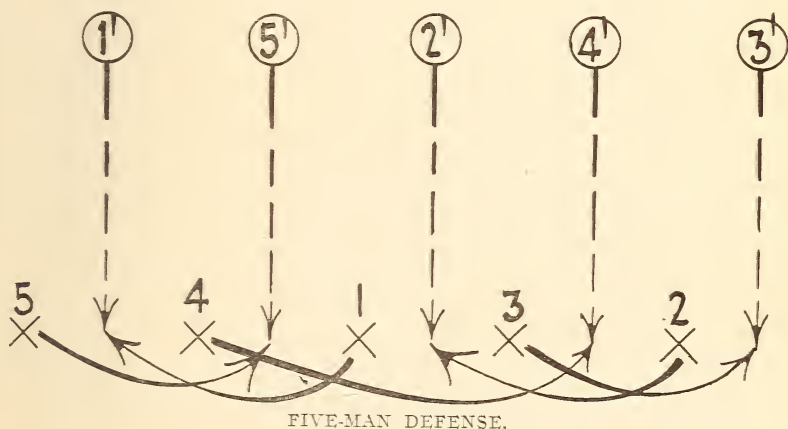
SMALL MAN BACKS UP WHILE BIG MAN COMES IN.



Sedran and it so happened that the Danbury team was leading by one point but with two minutes to go. Muller got possession of the ball and held it at arms-length, with his trunk stooped forward. Sedran could not do a thing with Muller on account of the latter's height, and the game ended with Danbury leading.

The only way to break up a play of that kind is to have another mate rush in from the front and try to take possession of the ball while the short man in the rear backs up just as soon as his mate comes in on the play. If the man in the rear does not back-up, a foul may be called on account of two men being on the ball at the same time.

The chapter on Playing the Defense will enlighten you on how to break-up "freezing" the ball.





## PLAYING THE DEFENSE

**D**URING the fifteen years in which I have been engaged in the game of basketball, I have managed to come in contact with any number of styles of defense. I realized quite early in my career that a strong defense was a most important factor for the success of a team and I therefore spent a great deal of time and thought in the study of this subject. Many teams with excellent material and brilliant prospects for successful seasons fail to live up to the standard expected of them because of their inability to function properly as a unit on the defense. The subject cannot be dealt with at too great a length.

As the result of my experience as a player on various professional teams of rank and as a coach of college teams, I am fully convinced that the five-man style of defense offers more advantages than any other. In the course of this chapter I shall present the best means of utilizing the five-man game and the methods which individuals should adopt.

Fundamentally, it appears to me, the system is sound because five men, forming a solid or united barrier in front of their goal, can accomplish more than five men scattered over the floor. The diagram on the preceding page illustrates the position which team X takes when on the defense. Each member of the team is numbered to correspond with his individual opponent on the offensive side.

This style of defense is strictly a man-to-man game. Yet I do not hesitate to say that unless there is the cooperation to "pick-off" when men get away even though the man coming down the field is not one's own, it will not be long before this system will crumble to pieces. The matter of picking-off or "shifting" is taken up later on in the chapter.

Team X is lined up on the defense, and each man on that team knows exactly who his man is on the offense. Number one moves over to the side of the court where his man is manoeuvring. Number two shifts over to where his man is and remains directly in front of him. And that is carried on right through with every man on

the defense. If a player is on the right side of the court and his man is over towards the left side of the court, he would certainly be taking chances in not getting over to cover him. The eye can travel faster than the man, but when it comes to a show down, the man is really responsible.

When five men are lined up in a row across the floor, the possibility of blocking each other off unintentionally will be present if the men do not shift away from each other. The best way to prevent blocking is for men to look from side to side repeatedly through the corners of their eyes, taking care meanwhile not to collide with their own men. While blocking off a man is a foul, some officials may not see a block-off, and a player's opponent may get away from him with ease, unless another member of his team picks him off for him. As long as the chances of being blocked are present, a player should always be on the alert, not only to look directly at his opponent and at the ball but also to avoid being blocked by one of his opponents who may come to him from the side or from behind.

Once a player gets directly in front of his man, let him take in the whole field of play. A poor defensive man watches his personal opponent only. A good defensive man watches the ball as well and is ever ready to intercept passes and to shift to another man, should the other cut for the basket without any opposition, all at the same time. Many players watch the ball so intensely that an offensive player will slide in behind them, receive a pass and take an open shot for the basket.

Suppose a forward goes down the floor on a dead run, receives a pass, takes a shot, and continues on underneath his basket. His opponents get hold of the ball and bring it down the floor very quickly. In the meantime, the first forward is slow in getting back on the defense and his opposing guard hurries up the field. Who is going to get him? If some one member of the team does take this opposing guard, the first forward hurrying back on the defense will take an uncovered player. "Shifting," this is a very important factor on the defense. A team that knows how to shift well is a hard team to beat.

Here is the theory. Whenever a player hurries back on the defense and finds his man being covered by one of the mates on his team, it is his duty to make a dash for

his team-mate's personal opponent who may be somewhere about the court in the danger zone. Take the above case of the forward going in on a play who continues under the basket after the shot. He is going so fast that he cannot stop suddenly. Now when his opponent runs down the field uncovered, one of the men in the backfield should pick him off and stay with him until his side gets possession of the ball. In the meantime, the other forward has hurried back and taken his team-mate's opponent. The forward also should stay with that man until his side gets possession of the ball.

Stated simply, the forward and the guard on each side of the court should look their opponents over very closely, to be able to determine which is which when they are compelled to switch. For example, when the ball is thrown up at center, a common play is to have the guards shoot down the floor and take a pass. Now, a heady guard, seeing this man getting away from his forward, will leave his man and run to cover the guard coming through. It is the business of the forward on the same side to hurry over and cover his team-mate's free man as long as his own man is being covered. When a player does shift he must not forget to stay with his temporary opponent until his side gets possession of the ball again. Spectators too can readily determine who is at fault when a basket is made.

There are various other styles of defense but few are dependable. For example, below is a system of defense that one of the leading colleges in the East used for several years. Their results were very poor until the five-man defense was substituted.

When team X swept back on the defense they usually assumed a position with three men in front and two behind. These men were assigned to zones (left and right). The first two men down the floor on the offense were allowed to slip through the defense and then the two back men kept them covered. The men in the front row defense knew that two opponents had slipped through, for there were then three opponents in front of them. As shown in the diagram on page 52, the fault of this system lies in the possibility of men crossing over from zone 1 to zone 4 and leaving one man to cover two, which is impracticable. Number 4 had his man to cover

in zone 4 and when number 5 permitted number 1 to cross from zone 1 to 4 without shifting over and giving number 4 some assistance there was trouble ahead.

When a team is using the three men in front and two men behind style of defense, there are different locations on the floor in which the defense can be set, but it is customary to set the first three men between the center circle and the rim of the foul circle, and the two back men about twelve feet out from the basket.

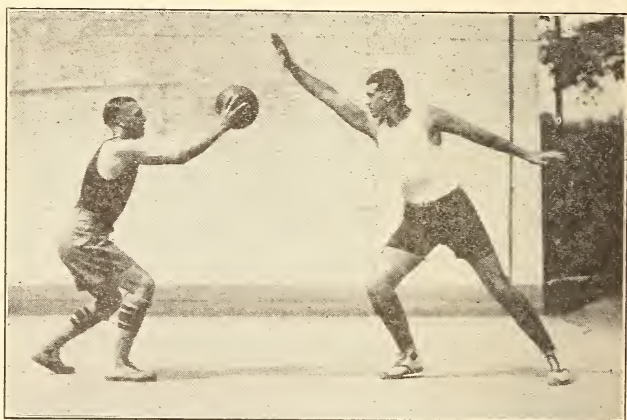
There are coaches who in using the five-man defense let their forwards cover a certain section of the floor without having them follow the ball in close to the back-board. The forwards remain in this section of the floor so that if one of their team-mates gets the ball he can whip it blindly to that section of the floor and the forwards will recover it. The University of Toronto used this style of play against the City College Team last year. The Toronto style was troublesome because the college guards rushed up the court to make baskets while the Toronto forwards remained back. By and by, Toronto got possession of the ball and without any loss of time, their guards threw the ball the entire length of the court to their forwards, who made baskets without any opposition. After a while, as should always be the case, one of the guards on the college team decided that he was going to stay back whenever his mate went up the field. This roving guard, going up the field without his opposing forward following him, was fed continuously by his mates, and he shot basket after basket at random.

Whenever there is a "held-ball," defense is essential. Each player should close in on his opponent so that the ball is not tapped to him. He ought not only to keep his eye on the ball being thrown up by the official but try hard not to have his man get possession of the ball. His man may stay with him on the left side of the court, and just as soon as the ball is thrown up, swing over to meet the tap and get it that way. I recall the well-trained Camden team of the Eastern League. They were all big men and able to out-jump most of their opponents. One never knew who was going in for the tap at a held-ball. If a team figured on going in to get hold of the ball they were apt to be crossed by a direct tap for the basket, with a Camden player racing back to meet the



ball and shooting the basket without any trouble. The only thing for one to do was to stay in close to one's man, ready to run with him if he raced for the basket and also to catch or slap the ball away from him if a pass were made.

Close defense is necessary when opponents are awarded a free throw after a foul. The Camden team and for that matter all teams in the league would place their two largest men underneath the basket, and if the shot was missed they would tap it back to the men on the sides, to the foul shooter or to a man waiting for a pass in the center of the court. The defense had to close in on these men in order to prevent them from getting possession of the ball. Many players are anxious to run up the field and beat their opponents to the basket before their sides get possession of the ball, and by doing so they leave their men uncovered.



WAVING RIGHT HAND TO DISCONCERT THE SHOOTER.

In defense nothing is more annoying to a man about to shoot than to have his opponent wave his right hand overhead. The shooter feels that the shot may be blocked, with the result that he hurries the ball to the basket. Invariably his direction will be poor and the try will go to waste. One should not wave his hand unless his opponent has the ball and appears to be contemplating a try for the basket. However, when an opponent receives a pass, he should creep up to his man so



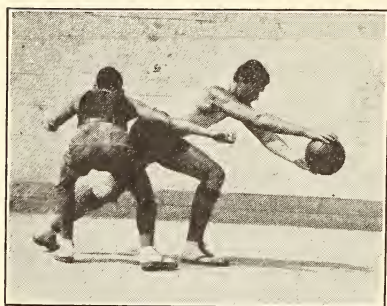
as to be about a yard and a half in front, and then raise his hand. If his man attempts a pass, it may be blocked, and if he shoots, his direction and aim may be impaired.

When playing a man on the defense, one must never in the desire to close-in on him run up to meet him. There are forwards who wait for just such an opportunity. As soon as their opponents run up to them, they let out on a sprint in the opposite direction. By the time the opponent turns, it is impossible to catch the forward on the way to the basket. If the forward is playing in and around the foul line, the guard should get in close to him, but if the forward is out somewhere about the center of the court, the guard should keep about two yards from him, ready to run with him, should he cut for the basket.

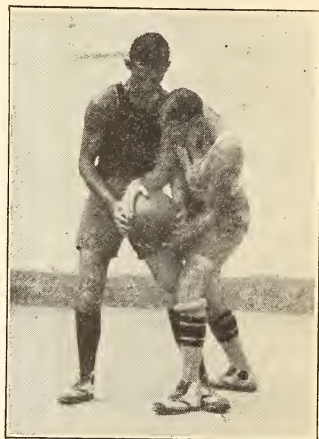
A defensive player should keep on his toes when he is moving about. A good offensive forward generally will make a fast sprint away down to the corner of the court, make a sudden stop and cut in for the basket to receive a pass. The next time he will repeat the same thing but instead of cutting in to the basket, he will feint in, in an effort to take his opponent off guard, and, if he is successful, will be in a position to shoot for the basket without being blocked. Should the player on the offense manage to outguess his man, that man should, as a last resort, raise his right hand high in the hope of breaking the direction of the shot.

When a man does come down the court with great speed and his man knows that he has been using a good deal of feinting, the thing for the defense to remember is to disregard any feint that may be made to the outside of the court but be prepared to meet him coming toward the inside. The theory is that if a man is coming down the left side of the court, feints left and then goes right, and if he is successful in drawing over his opponent with the left feint, all he has to do is to dribble straight to the basket without being intercepted. On the other hand, if his left feint is disregarded, the player with the ball will be obliged to pass or have his dribble play broken. If he came down the same side of the court, feinted right and then went left, he would find himself at a bad angle for shooting and would be at too great a distance from the basket, which would leave his opponent time to catch up with him.

Whenever a shot is taken at the basket, players who are near enough ought to go in to meet the ball by leaping into the air and taking it off the backboard. A common fault with men on the defense is that they figure incorrectly. "I thought John would take the ball off the backboard"—or—"I didn't think it was possible for the man to come in on a run and take the ball so quickly while I waited for it to come down after the shot." One should *always leap up* after a ball when going to meet it *under an opponent's basket*. A good offensive team is taught the advantages of following up the ball after a shot. If a man is under the basket waiting for the ball to come to him, the men coming in fast are going to leap over his shoulders and either shoot a basket, or, the next best thing, will get possession of the ball.



FEINTING  
OPPONENT  
OUT  
OF  
POSITION.



ATTACKING THE BALL.

On the defensive in following a ball off the backboard in the event that I obtain possession of the ball, I use a feint left or right. With my back turned to my opponent as he comes in for the ball, the chances are that he will attempt either to take the ball away or to make a "held-ball." Invariably the attack is fooled and drawn away from the play with a rapid feint to the left, followed by a feint to the right.

Assuming that a player meets a forward coming down the floor and stops him, what is the best way to handle

him if he turns his back and holds the ball away? The player should not grab the forward by the arm or waist, but close in on him with his body touching his opponent, swing his left arm *over his opponent's left* and clip the ball with his left hand. Let him place his left foot directly in front of his man's left and a bit to the right. Then let him swing his right hand over his opponent's left shoulder and tighten up on the ball with both hands.

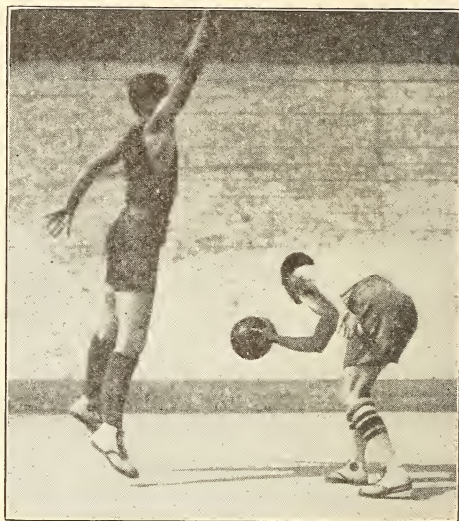


GUARDING AND FEELING POSITION OF OPPONENT.

There are many players who will take advantage of a man by clipping his right or left hand if he tries to get in on the ball from behind when it is in their hands. I remember having played with Wally Swenson, the blond-haired guard who was with the Bridgeport team in the Connecticut State League. Swenson executed this play to perfection. Whenever a man charged into him with right or left hand underneath his elbows, he would clip either hand, or sometimes both. With the ball in his hand, and his opponent's arm or arms locked underneath his elbows, he would pretend, by his actions, that he was being held back from advancing because of "holding" on the part of his opponent, and in that manner induce the referee to call a foul on his opponent.

At times during the course of the game while playing the defense an opponent will get in back of a player

and manœuver from side to side while the ball is up at the other end of the court. One should always keep the man and the ball in sight on the defense. There have been other suggestions, such as picking-off, intercepting long passes, etc., but one's man and the ball are the two important factors. The best thing for one to do is to feel in what direction one's man is traveling by touching him with either hand. All this time the player is also keeping his eye on the ball, by facing in the direction in which



A LEAP TO STOP SHOT, OPPONENT GOING AROUND.

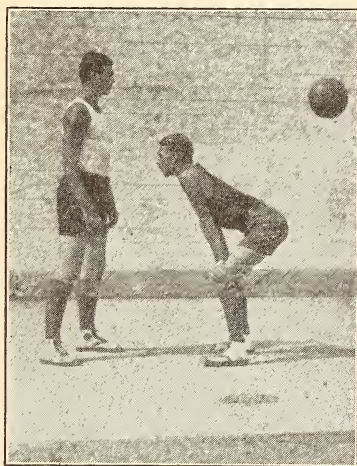
the ball is being passed about, regardless where his man may be. Just as soon as the player realizes that he is no longer touching his opponent, he should turn quickly and get after him, irrespective of the location of the ball. Then as soon as he comes up with his man, let him turn immediately, for the ball may be coming in his direction.

When playing an opponent who sets himself for a shot, a man should be ready to leap off his feet in order to block the ball. What often happens is that the shooter will make a bluff shot at the basket and, as his man leaps off the ground, will then dribble around him and leave him far behind. It behooves the defense to



look before he leaps. The player should approach his opponent carefully with his hand raised overhead, so as to disconcert the shooter and with attention centered at both his feet so as to be able to go to the right or left with his man as the situation may require.

Here is shown the incorrect way of playing a man on the defense. One will notice here that the guard has his eyes fixed and his mind concentrated on his opponent and hasn't the slightest idea as to where the ball is.



INCORRECT WAY OF PLAYING AN OPPONENT ON THE DEFENSE.

There are times when a player will manoeuvre about underneath his own basket in an effort to get directly in back of his opponent. His mates, passing the ball about elsewhere, will wait for the opportunity and then make a slow loop pass to him over the guard's head as he feigns ignorance of the approach of the ball until it is almost upon him. The player either shoots at the basket or makes a fast get-away after catching the ball. If a player's opponent is in front of him, he can watch the ball and his opponent, intercept passes and pick off men who are coming through uncovered; but once his man gets in back of him, unless the player is able to feel him as illustrated on page 47, he is taking chances of being scored upon easily. Furthermore, if a man's opponent should move away from him and he is not in a position



to feel him, let him forget the ball for the moment and go to locate his opponent at once. I would suggest that if a player is going after his man with his back to the ball he raise his right or left hand, so that if a pass is made to his opponent as he is covering him, the ball will possibly strike his hand and thus break the pass.

Whenever a man is playing his opponent who has possession of the ball beneath his own basket on the outside, he ought not only to play him but also be prepared, after the pass is made to one of the men coming in on a run, to block that man from making a shot. While he is with his man, he ought to glance around and see if there is any man cutting-in for the basket unguarded. If so, he should shift away from the man guarded and take the one coming in. If the incoming player is covered, then watch the outside man after he makes a pass into the court, for he may draw away and receive a return pass.



STAND A LITTLE AHEAD OF YOUR MAN WITH ARMS  
EXTENDED AT CENTER BALL PLAY.

Playing the position of guard when the ball is being thrown up at center, one should always play a man closely if the opposing center is getting the tap. A heady guard will not only try to prevent his forward from running in and seizing the ball after the ball is tapped by his center, but he must be watchful of any attempt on the part of the guard of that same team to sprint for the basket uncovered, or of the possibilities of a "direct-tap" being made to the basket from the center. In that

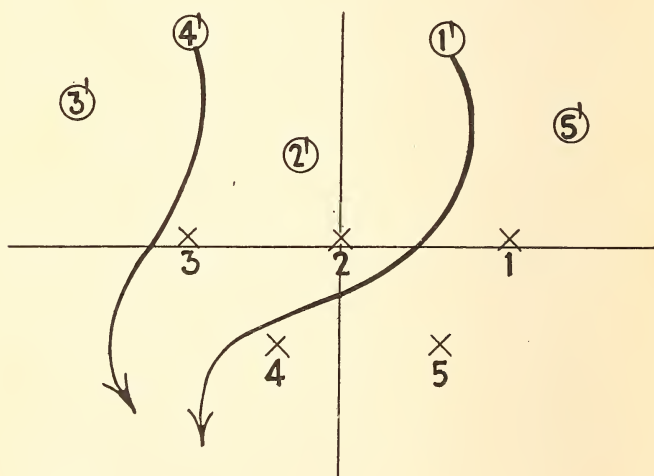
event he must think of four things, his man, the ball, the opposing guard coming through, and a direct tap to the basket.

I have always coached boys when playing the position of guard to play an opponent closely. If I were playing on the right side of the court, I would make it my business to have my left foot eight to ten inches ahead of my opponent's feet so that if the ball were tapped to my side, I would have that much more start on him in getting possession of the ball. I would also have both arms raised sideward and shoulder level for a double purpose. First, in going in for a center play, if I couldn't get possession of the ball, I would punch or slap the ball so that my opponent could not get hold of it. Secondly, if my opponent should by chance feint away from me, as a last resort, I could check him from advancing by stiffening my right arm.

The matter of breaking up "freezing" when the other team has possession of the ball is important. The one and only way to break this up is for each player to *close in* on his man and prevent him from receiving a pass by either slapping the ball away from him when a pass is made or intercepting the pass. Let each man stay with his opponent all the time. If his opponent should keep moving from side to side, or perhaps run up and down the court, he must not allow him any freedom. It would be foolish, however, to cover him well and lose sight of the ball. Two things then: let each player close-in on his man and keep his eye on the ball. There are some guards who have difficulty in playing against a very fast man, when the opposing team commences to freeze the ball. I know of instances where the guard, realizing that he was playing a fast man, hesitated to go up the field to close-in on his man because of the fear of being outsprinted by him in a dash to the basket. Regardless how fast a man may be, when the game is close and his team is behind in the score, each player must get right up to his man and try to break up the play. It is not going to do him or his team much good if he stands still about the center of the court and waits for his opponent to come to him.

Finally, when an opponent is dribbling down the floor at a rapid pace, one should try not to block him by standing right in front of him. The man should be taken from

one side to avoid accidents. The idea is to play the offense from the side and *draw him away from the center of the court*. If that is done one's man will be so much further away from his basket and the possibilities of making his shot good will be reduced. If the attack should get ahead, try to stop his shot by stretching out a stiff arm to the point of his elbow. There is no need of hacking or pushing. There are men who will figure that they would rather take a chance on a foul, since one point for the other team at the foul line is much better than two. Fouling an opponent intentionally is not only poor sportsmanship but also, with the present amateur rules which disqualify a player for committing four personal fouls, poor judgment, since a player puts himself in jeopardy of disbarment. The morale of a team is apt to crumble when a regular is put out of a game and one ought to be careful of that fact.



ZONE DEFENSE SYSTEM.

## PLAYS

### EXECUTION AND DEFENSE

**A**SSUMING that a team has a tall man jumping center so that they can depend upon him to give them the tap-off, the plays given below are practical. In case a team has not a tall man to give them the ball, suggestions will be given as to how to break up each play mentioned. I have used these plays with the teams that I have represented for the last three years and I also have had the teams at City College use them to great advantage.

X with numeral will take the offense on all plays.

O with numeral and (') enclosed will take the defense on all plays.

↑ indicates the course in which the player is running.  
..... indicates the direction in which the ball is passed.

Team 1—2—3—4—5 will take the offense on all plays.

Team 1'—2'—3'—4'—5' will take the defense on all plays.

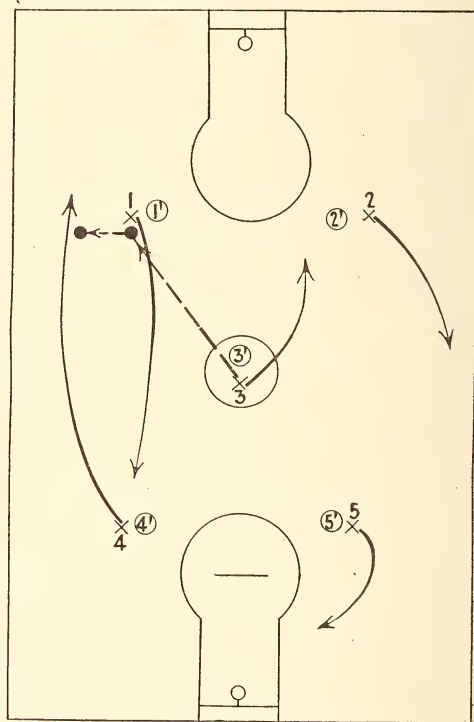
#### EXECUTION PLAY NO. 1.

In the play shown in Fig. 1, 1 runs in for the ball on the tap-off, taking the tap high in the air. 4 in the meantime playing guard opposite 1, times his play and just as soon as 1 gets possession of the ball makes a break for the basket, 1 feeding him accurately. 1 runs back to the position of guard and takes 4's place. 3 swings around his man on the right side of the court and cuts in to assist 4 in making the play. 2 draws away from the play in order to carry his guard away from the basket. 1 and 5 stay back to cover the defense. In case 3 and 4 are unable to score they should throw the ball back to either 1, 2, or 5 to start the play over again.

#### DEFENSE PLAY NO. 1.

When 3 taps the ball to 1, it is the duty of 1' to watch any man coming through on his side. Since 1 has possession of the ball, and observes through the corner of his eye 4 cutting in for the basket on the same side, it is the duty of 1' to shift and take 4 coming through. Also

2' should not be misled by 2 in drawing up the floor. Not only should he glance to the left side of the court but he should also be ready to intercept passes on the right side of the court. 2' should follow 3 at all times, especially after the tap-off, inasmuch as 3 is getting the jump. Play No. 1 is used extensively by teams that have fast



NO. 1.

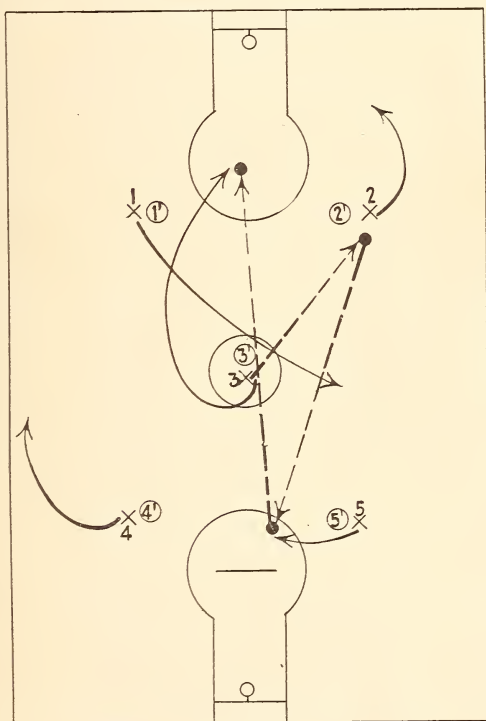
guards who are able to cut in for the basket, and it is the duty of the opposing guards to pick these men off should they outsprint their forwards to the basket.

## EXECUTION PLAY NO. 2.

The ball is thrown up at center, 3 taps the ball to 2 who comes in high to receive the tap; 5 in the meantime shifts away slightly to the left of his man to receive the pass from 2. 1 crosses over directly in back of 3', 1' in the meantime follows 1. 3 swings wide and cuts in directly for the basket and receives a long loop pass from



5. If this play is worked properly when 1' follows 1 directly in back of 3', 3' in an effort to catch 3 as he cuts in for the basket will unintentionally be blocked by either 1 or 1'. 4 follows in to the basket in an effort to help 3 to score. 2 also, after making the play to 5, swings around and goes to assist in the play.



NO. 2.

I have worked this play with the men at college and also with professional teams and have seldom seen it to fail when worked properly.

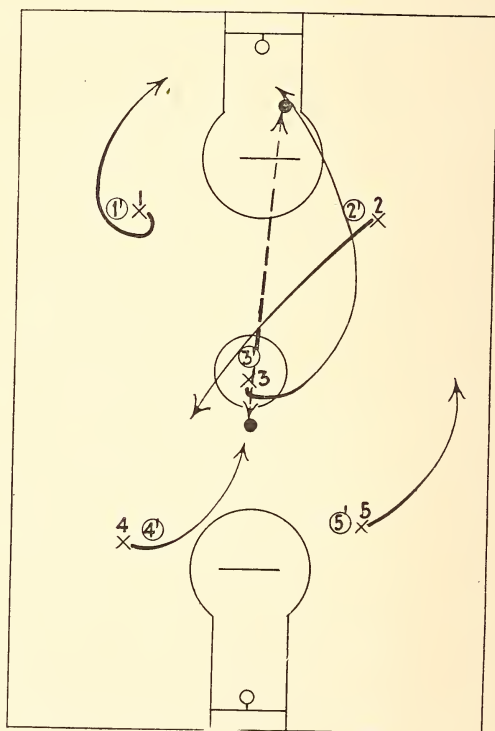
#### DEFENSE PLAY NO. 2.

When 3 taps the ball to 2, 2' should stick close to 2 to prevent him from getting hold of the ball. 5' should close in on 5 for the same reason, since his center is not getting the tap. If 3' should be unintentionally blocked by either 1 or 1', 2' should be ready to pick off any man

that may get away and be cutting for the basket. If 1' is playing his position properly, he ought not to follow 1 directly in back of 3', because of the possibility of 3' being blocked.

### EXECUTION PLAY NO. 3.

Using the center man as a means of cutting in to the basket and being fed after the tap, Play No. 3 is somewhat similar to Play No. 2, only that the play is faster and that the ball is not passed into more than one man's hands. The ball is thrown up at center and 3 taps it directly in back of the side where 4 is playing. If on the left side, the



NO. 3.

ball is tapped in back of 3's left shoulder. 4 feints left to outguess his opponent and suddenly goes right to meet the ball as tapped by 3; 2 in the meantime cuts directly in back of 3' with 2 following past the center; 3 swings

wide, turns left while on the run, and takes a direct pass from 4; 1 in the meantime draws away to the left side of the court for the purpose of taking his guard out of the play; 5 swings over to the side of the court to cover the defense and to receive a pass.

### DEFENSE PLAY NO. 3.

Again the reader is reminded that after the ball is tapped, one must not lose the man by watching the ball. Hence, 3' should follow 3 after the tap; and if 2 should unintentionally block 3', it is the duty of 2 to shift and take 3 as he cuts in for the basket. 1' should not draw up the court too far with 1 because he is being taken away from the basket in order that a play may be made. As long as the ball is not tapped to 1 it is the duty of 1' to be on guard to assist 2' in case there may be need of it.

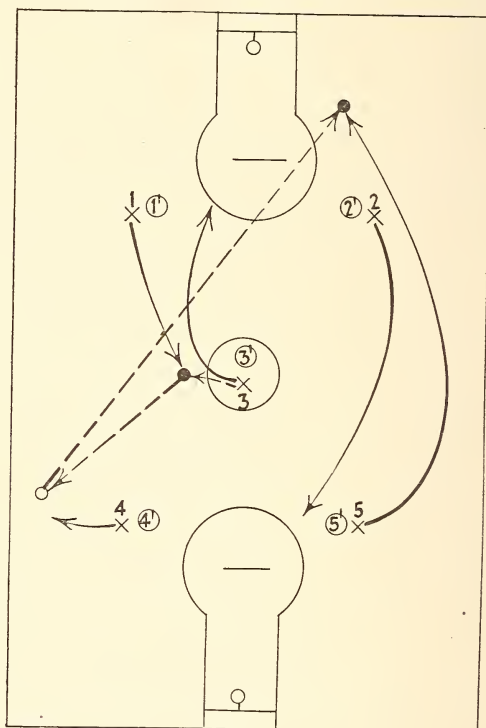
### EXECUTION PLAY NO. 4.

Fig. 4 shows one of the most dangerous plays in the game of basketball. Every man is put into play, and if passes are made accurately and there are no fumbles, it ought to work successfully most every time that it is tried. The ball is thrown up at center; 3 taps it to 1 who comes in high for the ball and bats it directly to the hands of 4 who swings out to meet the ball. The play is timed. As 1 goes in on his side to receive the tap, 2 goes down on his side to cut in between 5 and 5'; 5 in the meantime runs down the field on his side and receives a long loop pass from 4; 3 after the tap swings way to the left of the court so that his man will not intercept the pass which will be made from 4 to 5; when the pass is made 3 cuts in from the side to follow up the shot or perhaps receive a pass from 5, who may not be in a position to shoot; 1, 2, and 4 cover the defense in and about the center of the court, playing in close and ready to receive a throw-back from either 3 or 5, who may be covered.

### DEFENSE PLAY NO. 4.

After the ball is tapped at center, 3' should stay with 3; 1' should stay in close to 1 and try to keep him from receiving the ball at center; 4' should raise his right hand high to try to block the pass about to be made by 4. So much for the left side of the court. The guards and the forwards must work together in the matter of shifting, and cooperation in this matter is of prime importance in breaking up

plays. Hence, on the right side of the court, 2' and 5' SHOULD WORK TOGETHER IN SHIFTING. When 2 goes down the right side of the court and cuts in between



NO. 4.

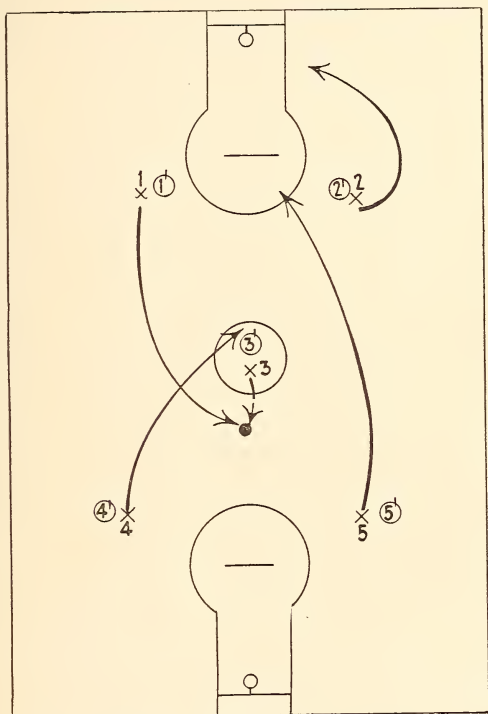
5 and 5', 2' should not follow 2 all the way down. Assuming that 2 does block 5' out of the play, it is the duty of 2' to shift and take 5 while 5' takes 2. That is a rule that should be followed in all plays.

#### EXECUTION PLAY NO. 5.

When there is but a minute to go and one's team is two points behind a play such as explained in Fig. 5 may be of great help. It was five years ago, when I first broke into the professional game, that I saw this play used successfully. I was with the Knickerbockers of New York and we played against the Newark Turners of Newark, New Jersey. The "Knicks" were leading by two points with but a minute to go. It was here that John Murray, who played guard for the



Turners and later coached Columbia University basketball team, called time-out. His men got together and planned to work this play. Chris Leonard, 3, jumping center for the



NO. 5.

Turners, tapped the ball back, and the play was neatly timed, for Beckman, 1, who was playing forward, came shooting in and caught the ball just as it was coming down. Murray, 4, cut in between Beckman, 1, and his opponent, 1', causing a "legal block." Beckman, 1, in the meantime had plenty of time to make a shot without even hurrying. He tied the score and later, playing an extra period, the Turners scored five points against the "Knicks" and won the game, 25 to 20.

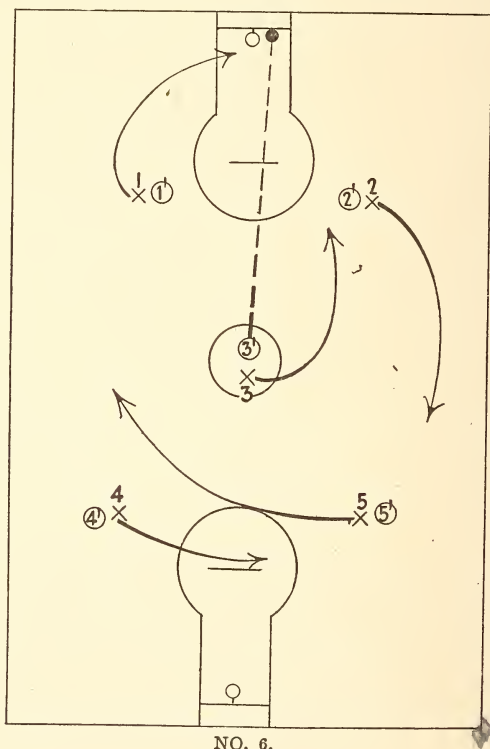
#### DEFENSE PLAY NO. 5.

The ball being thrown up at center, 3' should stay close to 3 after the tap; 4' should stay close to 4 and also be ready to cut in the direction of the ball when it is tapped at center;

1' should try to freeze 1 way to the side of the court to prevent him from going in to steal the ball, 2' should do the same with 2; 5' should follow 5 all the way down to the basket should 5 make a break for his goal. It is the duty of the man nearest to 1, when he is about to take the shot, to try to block the shot by raising this right hand high and waving it from side to side.

### EXECUTION PLAY NO. 6.

The forward giving the signals should look around and see just how the opposing team is playing his men. Are they in close or are they playing "open"? They should help him



NO. 6.

to determine just what plays to use. In this play, assuming that the guards are playing the forwards closely, the use of the direct-tap would be timely. As the ball is thrown up at center 3 taps the ball to 1, 1 in order to make the play effective, must mislead his guard by making him believe that he

is going in directly to the center for the ball. In doing that, he makes a short run, stops suddenly, makes a fast turn right about, and dashes for the ball, which is tapped forward by 3; 2 in the meantime, moves up the floor on his side in an effort to draw his guard away from the play; 3 goes in after the tap to assist 1; 5 also moves in to be of some help, while 4 covers the defense.

#### DEFENSE PLAY NO. 6.

Guards should always be careful that opposing forwards do not feint them away so as to cause them to lose their balance. 1' in this play should stay in close to 1 to prevent him from getting possession of the ball and at the same time to be ready to stay with him should he shift, feint, or turn in the opposite direction. 2' should stay close to 2 but should not move too far down the court; 2' as well as 1' when playing against a team that has a center who is out-jumping their center should always be on guard for a direct-tap, and also watch their guards on the respective sides coming through.

#### EXECUTION PLAY NO. 7.

The forward giving signals finding that he has worked play No. 6 successfully, suddenly turns around and uses play No. 7 which is another form of direct-tap, effective where there is a fast guard. If the forward finds that his guard follows him all the way through when the ball is thrown up at center, he should use play No. 7 from time to time. The ball is thrown up at center and is tapped by 3 directly forward and slightly to the left; the play is "timed" properly, and as 1 starts up the floor with 1' following him, 4 starts down the floor at the same time. To make matters easy for 4, 1 cuts in directly between 4 and 4'; 1 does not touch either man as he goes through; 4 continues on the same side and meets the ball that was tapped by 3 and dribbles up to the goal to make a basket. 2 moves down the floor for the purpose of taking his guard out of the play; 3 cuts in for the basket after the tap to either take a pass from 4 who may not be in a position to shoot or to follow up the shot of 4, 1 and 5 covering the defense.

#### DEFENSE PLAY NO. 7.

*Guards must watch opposing guards coming through, especially when their center man is not getting the jump at all center plays. When the ball is tapped forward, 1' while he is playing 1 closely should be ready to shift away from*

The diagram illustrates a 5-stringed instrument, likely a veena, with a fretted neck and two circular sound holes. A sequence of movements or fingerings is indicated by numbered circles (1-5) and crosses (1'-5') with arrows. A dashed line connects a dot on the neck to a circle labeled 3 and 3x.

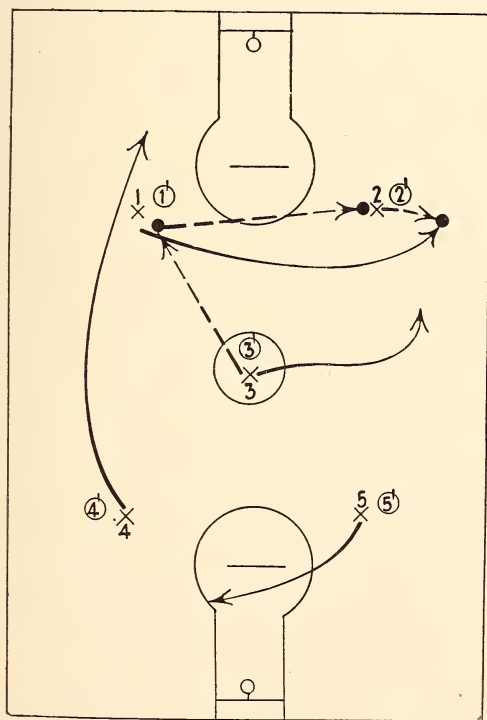
give the play away. So, here, the defensive guard can generally tell by watching the feet whether the opposing guard is coming through on the play. 2' should stay close to his man but ought not to be taken past the center of the court if his man advances toward the center; 3' should stay



with 3 after tap regardless of what the play is; if 4' is blocked unintentionally, 1' *should shift* and take 4 as he makes a sprint for the basket, while 4' takes 1.

### EXECUTION PLAY NO. 8.

This is an excellent play when two forwards are working together harmoniously. Two years ago, I played with the Whirlwinds, an independent team composed of some of the leading basketball players in the country. Play No. 8 was worked repeatedly with great success, first, because the center (Chris Leonard at the time) gave us the tap, and secondly, because of the team-work between the forwards (Barney



NO. 8.

Sedran and myself). The play was worked as follows: The ball was tapped to Sedran, 1, who with the two-hand chest pass, threw the ball to me, 2, and continued on the run directly in back of me, 2. When he, 1, got within close distance, (I), 2, made a half turn and slipped the ball into Sed-

ran's hands, 1, and drew away. At the same time, without any personal contact, 1, 2', cut off Sedran's man, 1', while the latter, 1, would dribble around to the basket without any opposition; 4 would go down the floor and either follow, 1, Sedran's shot or take a pass from him, 1, if he was covered; 3 would swing over to the side and then cut in to assist on the play; 5 would stay back and cover the defense.

#### DEFENSE PLAY NO. 8.

When the ball is tapped to 1, 1' should try to break up the play and if he is unsuccessful, he should *stay* with 1 until the play is discontinued. If 1' should be blocked unintentionally, it is the duty of 2' to *shift* and take 1, while 1' will immediately take 2; 3' should also follow 3 after the ball is tapped at center and keep his eye on the ball at the same time; 4' should follow down the field and prevent 4 from shooting or receiving a pass; 5' should stay back with 5.

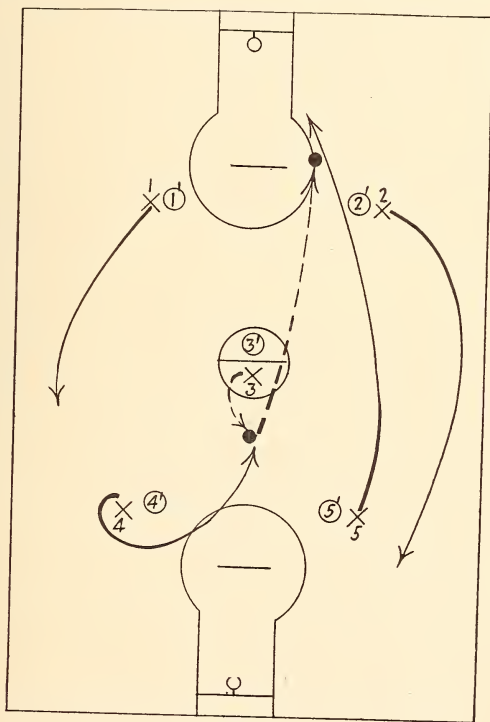
#### EXECUTION PLAY NO. 9.

The direct-tap and the back-tap are two dangerous plays and will always prove successful if the defensive guards do not watch their offensive guards coming through on the play. The ball is thrown up at center, and batted directly back to the guard that has been assigned to take all the back-taps. It is generally assigned to the left guard as he is in a better position to throw it with his right hand. 3 taps the ball back to 4 who swings over to the center and catches the ball. 5 "times" the play and makes a dash for the basket just as the ball is batted back; 4 makes a long loop pass to 5, throwing the ball directly ahead of 5 so that he can meet the ball on the run instead of turning around to catch it. 2 runs in between 5 and 5' as they both run down the floor, in order to prevent 5' from interfering with 5's play; 1 and 2 move up the court purposely to take their guards out of the play and make sure that the pass will not be intercepted; 3 swings wide after the tap, in the opposite direction from which 5 is coming through, and then cuts in for the basket.

#### DEFENSE PLAY NO. 9.

When the Trenton team played the Original Celtics of New York a three game series to decide the winner of the Eastern League last year, one of the games won by the Trenton team was won mainly by using play No. 9. It was Murray Tome, 5, the fast roving guard for the Trenton Team that cut for the basket time and again and received a pass from his mate Tom Barlow, 4, and scored at random. True,

the play was worked to perfection from receiving the back-tap, 4, making an accurate throw and 5, outsprinting his man, 5', to the basket. *The guards failed to shift, and that accounted for the defeat.* In the final play-off game, the series being tied at one all, the Celtics team checked this play, which will be described below, and won the championship of the Eastern League on March 25th at the Camden Armory.



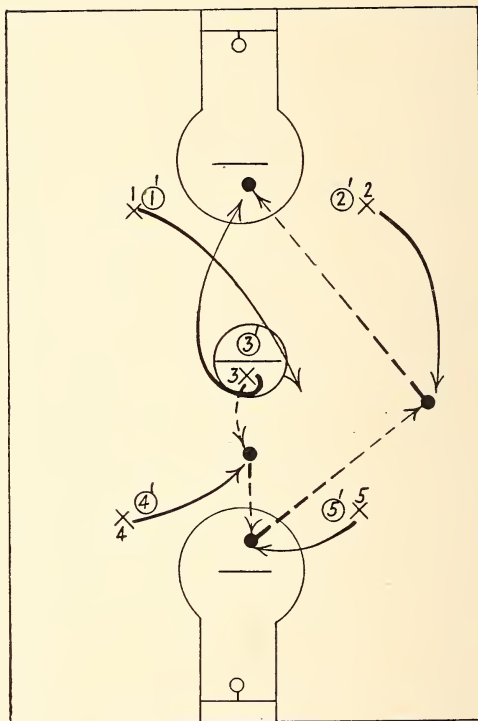
NO. 9.

1' and 2', realizing that their center is not getting the tap at center, play their forwards closely all the way in to the center and no further, and are ready to shift and take the guard on their respective side who is coming through, should it become necessary to do so. 3' stays with his man after the ball is batted back; 4' tries his utmost to prevent 4 from receiving the back-tap and if he fails, immediately raises his right hand high and tries to break up the direction of the pass. 5' makes a dash down the floor after 5, while 2' is always

ready to shift and take 5 if he is ahead of 5'; if 2' does shift and take 5, it is the duty of 5' to take 2.

### EXECUTION PLAY NO. 10.

On all back-taps from the center, it is the duty of the two guards to back one another up in case the play fails, and secondly, if the guard who takes the back-tap finds that his



NO. 10.

forward prevents him from making a pass he can relay it to his other guard, who swings over directly in back of him to make a pass. When guards work together that way, they are making rapid strides toward perfecting their game. No. 10 is a slow play, yet, very effective if worked properly. The ball is thrown up at center and 3 taps the ball directly in back of him, while 4 swings over and catches the tap on its downward course; 4 finds that 4' closes right in on him, makes a half turn, and passes on ball underhand to 5, who



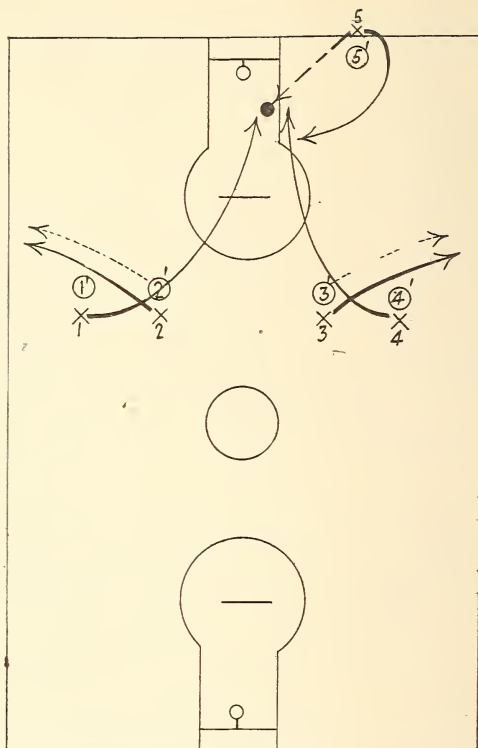
swings over to the center to back up the play; 5 is compelled to get rid of the ball quickly and makes a snappy overhand pass to 2 at the side of the court, while in the meantime, 1 crosses over directly in back of 3' and 3 swings around and receives a pass from 2.

#### DEFENSE PLAY NO. 10.

When the ball is batted back by 3, it is the duty of 4' and 5' to break up the play by preventing the forwards from getting possession of the ball. 2' should stay close to 2 part way up the floor but not past the center; the trouble is caused in this play between 1 and 1' and 3 and 3'; when 1 runs directly in back of 3' so that 3' in turning about to get 3 will unintentionally run into 1 or 1', it is the duty of 1' to *shift and take* 3 if the latter gets away while 3' is to pick off 1; unless these two groups work together 3 will always get away from his man.

#### EXECUTION PLAY NO. 11.

This play has been used by the teams that I have coached at City College for the past four years and has worked wonderfully well wherever used. It is an out-of-bounds play, with the ball in possession of the team which has its basket right close to where this play is about to start. This is the way I had my men line up just as soon as the ball was out of bounds under the City College basket. The tallest man on the team, 5, hurries out, and gets possession of the ball, and moves slightly away from the basket; 2 and 3 are guards and they do the cutting to the sides while 1 and 4, presumably fast men, swing around and cut-in to receive a pass from 5. 5 here exercises judgment in passing the ball to whichever one of the two forwards is in the better position to receive the pass. After 5 makes the pass he swings out and then makes a break for the basket to follow the shot. **THIS PLAY MUST BE TIMED.** The men work in pairs and the two getting into position first snap into this formation, executing it speedily. Let us take just one side or pair and see how they should go through with their part. Take 1 and 2. Just as soon as the ball is called out and 5 has possession of the ball, 2 starts on a run directly in back of 1'; 1 in the meantime waits until 2 comes directly in front of him, and makes a sudden break for the basket by swinging around 2' who is following 2 to the side. If the play is timed well, 1' will always be held up for a moment or he will be blocked unintentionally by either 2 or 2'; the same manoeuvring is



NO. 11.

repeated by the other pair 3 and 4. There should be a distance of three feet between 1's man and 2's man to enable them to have a running start on 1' and 2'.

#### DEFENSE PLAY NO. 11.

Have the players learned to shift? When they know how, they can break the play up in the following manner. As soon as the ball rolls out of bounds, let each one take his man, without getting too close to him. In this play it is extremely hard for players to watch the ball and their men at the same time, yet, as long as they are twenty-five to thirty feet away from the basket there is no harm done. Just as soon as the pair begin to work, the players should commence to shift at once. 2' should follow 2 and at the same time glance through the corner of his eye to the right of the court

to see how 1' is taken care of and be ready to shift; when 2 gets abreast of 1' and 1 swings around and cuts for the basket, 2' *should leave his man at once and go to 1 while 1' takes 2.* The same thing is repeated between 3 and 4 while pairing up with 3' and 4'; 5' should be ready to go and leave 5 before and after the pass is made from the out-of-bound position. 5' should glance around to see if any man has broken loose and, if so, he should run to cover the man. In this play, if it is successful, 1 and 2, will be cutting in to receive a pass without any opposition, and 5' is the only man who can come to the rescue, to prevent these men (1-4) from receiving a pass and shooting.

The two most important things to remember in connection with an out-of-bound ball are these:

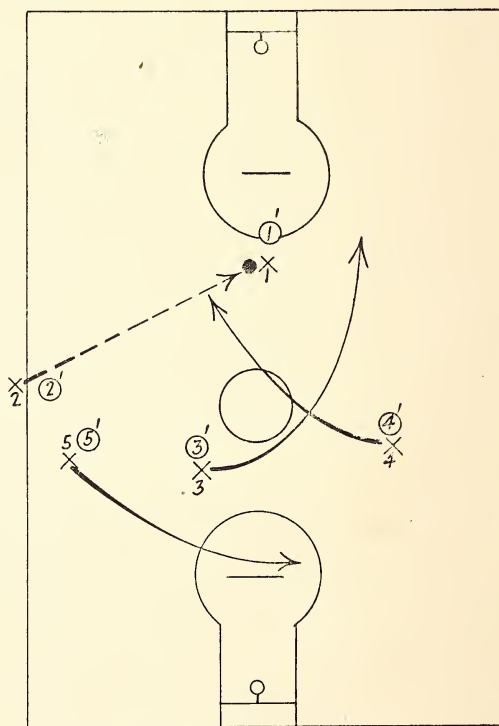
(1) a player should not stand directly in front of his opponent who is about to throw the ball in from the outside, because he is leaving an opening for him to cut in for the basket after he makes a pass to one of his mates on the court. The thing to do is to stand to the right of him if his basket is in that direction, or to the left as the case may be, then in order to get to his basket, the out-of-bounds player will have to go around his man to the center of the court. If a stand is taken directly in front, the out-of-bounds man may outsprint his opponent to the basket after the pass and there may not be anybody near enough to shift and take him. On the other hand, if he freezes his opponent from the side and compels him to go around, even if his opponent does beat him by swinging around after he makes a pass, he at least has the man in the center of the court and there may be someone near enough to take him.

(2) one should not play one's man too close to the outside line. If an opponent is standing still, a player need not fear so much; but, if he backs up purposely, starts on the run toward the line, and makes a pass at the same time, the player will find that in a majority of cases his opponent will outsprint him to the basket because he will have a running start. The opponent should step back a yard or two, keeping on his toes with his arms raised sideways, glancing to the side occasionally so that he does not run into anybody, and be prepared to meet his man on the run.

## EXECUTION PLAY NO. 12.

No. 12 shows 2 with the ball on the outside of the court and the position of 2' (standing directly in front); 2 makes a pass to 1 who quickly turns his back to his opponent

and holds the ball out with both arms outstretched; 3 and 4 inter-cross one another and cut for the basket; 2 also cuts for the basket after the ball is passed to 1; all three men 2, 3, 4, cut at the same time and 1 makes a pass to whichever one of the three he thinks best; 5 swings over to the center of the court to cover the defense. On some courts where there is plenty of room, 2 can back up three yards and start on the run to the out-of-bounds line, make a pass before crossing the line (while he is on the run), and then cut for the basket and have his mates feed him. If you have the playing space try this the next time you have the opportunity and see how satisfactory the results will be for you.



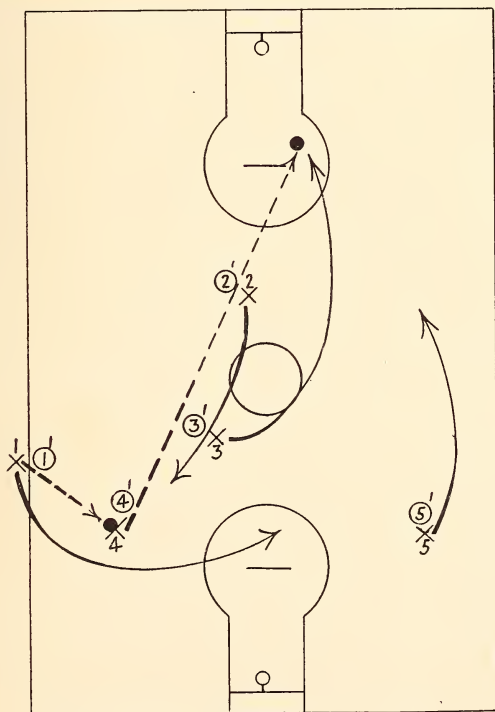
NO. 12.

### DEFENSE PLAY NO. 12.

The position in the diagram of 2 and 2' shows where 2' should play 2 on the defense when a ball is thrown in from the outside of the court. 1' should try to prevent 1 from re-



ceiving a pass from 2; 3' and 4' working together ought to break up the play as planned by 3 and 4 in intercrossing each other; if 3' shifts properly (if shifting is necessary), 3' should take 4 while 4' takes 3. Whenever two men shift, they should stay with the new men until the play is completed. If the ball goes out of bounds, the men can run back to their own opponents again, or, soon after, when the defensive side gets the ball. Furthermore, in this play should either 3 or 4 get away from their men, 1', who happens to be playing back with his man, should shift and take either one of the two, 3 or 4, depending upon which of the two is nearest to the basket; 5' should keep close to 5.



NO. 13.

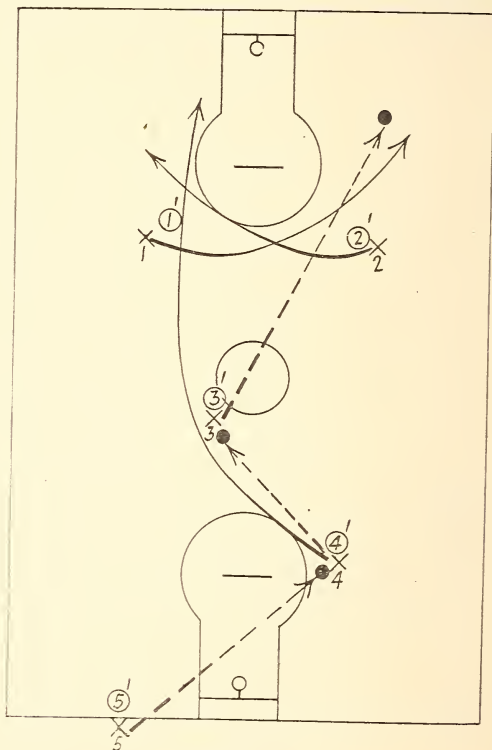
### EXECUTION PLAY NO. 13.

If a team can work this play to a point where each man performs his definite assignment, they will find play No. 13 most satisfactory from out-of-bounds at the side of the court.

Here we see No. 1 making a pass to 4; just as soon as the ball is passed 2 runs in the direction of 3 and 3'; 3' turning in an effort to catch up with 3 will probably bump into 2 or 2'; 4 makes a long loop pass to either one of the group of men cutting who are free, 3 or 5; 2, 4 and 1 stay back and cover the defense. When these men cut they should call aloud, and hold their right arms raised high.

### DEFENSE PLAY NO. 13.

After the ball is passed in from the outside, 1' should stay close to 1; 3' while playing 3 close by, should glance to the



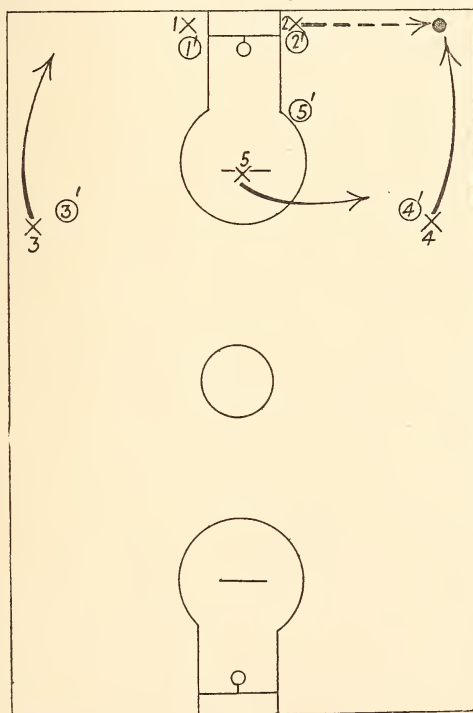
NO. 14.

sides occasionally and see if there are any men on the opposing team manoeuvring about him, who may block him off on the play; if 2, running in between 3 and 3', should unintentionally block 3' it is the duty of 2' to shift and take 3 coming down the court while 3' takes 2 and stays with him

until the play is completed; 5' should stay with 5; 4' should stay with 4 even though he is remaining back of the defense. A man may outguess his opponent by making a sudden break for the basket.

# EXECUTION PLAY NO. 14.

The first thing for the forwards to do immediately after one of their mates takes possession of the ball under their opponents' basket is to hurry up the field to their respective sides; 5 throws the ball to 4 who turns and quickly throws the ball to 3; 3 jumps to the side in an effort to draw away from the center, turns and returns pass to 4 who continues on up



NO. 15.

the court and at same time feeds either 1 or 2 who cross for the purpose of evading their guards. If 1 or 2 receives the pass and is able to dribble in to the basket, let him do so; but if not, he should return the ball to 4 who continues on through to shoot or to follow up the ball.

#### DEFENSE PLAY NO. 14.

When 4 receives the ball from 5 it is the duty of 4' to stay close to 4 and prevent him from making a play while he has possession of the ball; 3' should do likewise, and also when 3 draws over to the side on a dribble, 3' should try to slap the ball away from 3. Furthermore, when 3 returns the ball to 4, 4' should stay close to 4 until the play is completed. Even if 4 runs all the way down the court 4' should follow 4 until the play is completed. 2' and 1' should stay close to their men as they cross from side to side and keep their eye on the ball at the same time to prevent either 1 or 2 from receiving a pass. They (1' or 2') should be ready to leave their men and take 4 if he continues on down the floor without any opposition. 5' should cover 5 as long as the other side has possession of the ball.

#### EXECUTION PLAY NO. 15.

In this play the same positions should be taken on both the offense and defense by the same players. Assuming that you are on the offense, 1 and 2, the two tallest men on the team, should hurry under the basket, as soon as a foul is called on their opponents. 3 and 4 remain at the side of the court to mislead their opponents. When 5 takes a shot, 3 and 4 run to their respective corners of the court, and if the shot is missed, 1 or 2, depending on the side from which the ball rebounds, should bat the ball directly in back of them without even looking for 3 or 4. It is poor policy for 3 and 4 to stay in their corners directly in back of 1 and 2. If they do that, both 3' and 4' will close in on 3 and 4. The best thing for 3 and 4 to do, is to stay about four yards away and just as soon as the ball is shot make a dash for the corners. It is not advisable for 1 or 2 to try to shoot at the basket with 1' or 2' guarding them so closely; nor is it advisable to tap the ball back to 5. The most effective thing to do, is to tap the ball back to either 3 or 4 to make sure that they keep possession of the ball.

#### DEFENSE PLAY NO. 15.

After the shot, 5' should step directly in front of 5 to intercept the ball in case it is batted back to 5. 1' and 2' should remain close to 1 and 2 and try to get possession of the ball when it rebounds off the backboard. When playing on the defense that way, 1' and 2' should watch the positions of 1 and 2. It is a common thing for men who are playing their position under the basket when a foul is being shot to

The diagram illustrates a mechanical linkage mechanism. It features a central vertical link with a circular head at the top and a small circle at the bottom. A horizontal link is connected to the top of the vertical link. A curved link is attached to the side of the vertical link's head. Arrows and numbers indicate the sequence of motion: 1. A horizontal arrow points right from the top of the vertical link. 2. A curved arrow points up and right from the top of the vertical link. 3. A curved arrow points left from the bottom of the vertical link. 4. A curved arrow points up and right from the right side of the vertical link's head. 5. A curved arrow points down and left from the right side of the vertical link's head. A small circle is located at the bottom of the vertical link, and a horizontal line is drawn across the middle of the vertical link's head.

EXECUTION PLAY NO. 16.

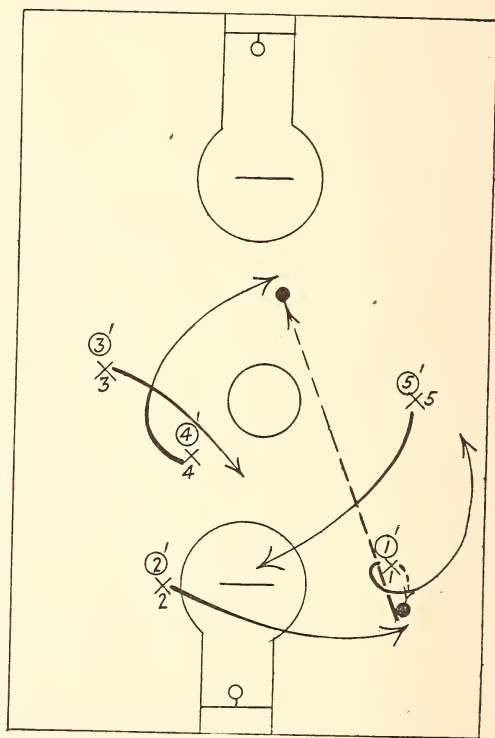
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who swings the ball directly over his head to 3, who in turn meets the pass and then shoots for the basket; secondly, 2 can bat the ball directly in back to 4 who runs to the corner to meet it and immediately turns and throws the ball back to 3 for a set shot.

# DEFENSE PLAY NO. 16.

After the shot, 5' should step in front of 5 to intercept the ball in case it is batted back to 5. 1' and 2' are to follow close with 1 and 2 and prevent them from making a play. 4'



NO. 17.

should stay out with 4 and if he runs into the corners 4' should follow him quickly to prevent him from getting possession of the ball. 3' should stay with 3 after the shot regardless of where 3 goes. 3 may purposely start on a run to the corners in an effort to get 3' moving in that direction,

then stop suddenly, and run back to the center in back of 5 to receive a pass. 3' should be prepared for the feint or bluff run by 3.

#### EXECUTION PLAY NO. 17.

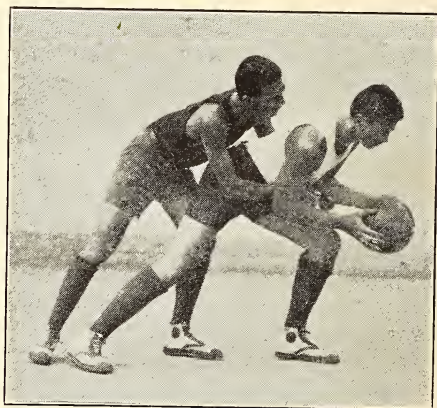
The "Camden Play" is one of the finest plays that I know whenever a held ball is called under an opponent's basket. Last season the Camden team, representatives of the Eastern League, used this play time and again successfully. The ball is thrown up between 1 and 1'; 2 purposely swings over to the side to mislead his opponent and just as the ball is thrown up, swings back and meets the ball as it is batted to him by 1. 3 runs down the floor, turns about, and runs back crossing directly behind 4'. 4 hurriedly swings away from 4' and makes a dash for the basket. 2 makes a long loop pass to 4 who either shoots, or dribbles to the basket for a shot. 5 swings back to the backfield and covers the defense with 2; 1, after tapping the ball to 2, cuts for the basket to assist 4 in the play.

#### DEFENSE PLAY NO. 17.

After the ball is thrown up by the official, 1' should remain close to 1 regardless of what part of the court he goes to, if the opposing side gets possession of the ball. 2' should stay with 2 if he draws away from the play, and yet, 2' should also be ready to run back with him to intercept the tap from 1 to 2. This play again centers about 3' and 4' in shifting. When 3 runs down the court and suddenly turns and cuts directly in back of 4', thus cutting off or perhaps unintentionally blocking 4', it is the duty of 3' to shift immediately and take 4, while 4' should pick off 3. Every man on the defense in playing his man should try to play directly in back of him so that he can not only see his man, but can follow the ball at the same time without turning around. So in this play, 3', playing directly in back of 3, can see exactly what is happening when 3 runs in back of 4' to cut him off from the play. 3' then can pick 4 without much trouble. 5' should stay with 5 even though he should move in the opposite direction for the purpose of taking his man out of the play.

## QUESTIONABLE TRICKS OF THE GAME

I FEEL it entirely incumbent upon me to inform my readers of certain tricks, legal or illegal, which have been used against me at some time or another in my basketball career, so that they will be prepared for any emergency that may arise. It is only in taking proper recognition of these pointers that a player can perfect his game. As long as there are possibilities that an opponent may work these tricks, a player who lacks the foresight to guard himself is apt to be surprised at a critical moment.



CLIPPING PLAYER'S ELBOWS.

In the chapter on Playing the Defense, I warned my readers not to tackle a man with both arms from behind because it is very common to see a clever guard clip both of his man's arms with his elbows or even drag his man a yard or two to make it appear as though he was being held around the waist. I have not forgotten the time when, as a youngster breaking into the game, I charged into Wally Swenson, in the manner described in that chapter. I tried to make a held ball by approaching from behind. Wally, however, clipped both of my arms between his elbows and his hips and dragged me fully fifteen feet. Grumbling over what I regarded a poor decision did not help any.

When on the defense, do not try to play your man too

closely lest your opponent give your arm a jerk and make a sprint for the basket. I first had this trick worked on me when I was playing guard against a very fast forward. I was all on edge to keep up with him and thought it best to play right up close to him. Much to my surprise, this heady player came abreast of me, with an air of unconcern suddenly grasped my wrist, gave it a quick jerk and made a dash for the basket. By the time I was able to turn, I found that he was way under the basket calling for the ball. In the future I played up fairly close to my man on the defense, but made sure to keep my arms taut to prevent my opponent from grasping hold of them.

Waiting for the ball to come off the backboard with both arms raised over my head, I was astonished one time to find that my opponent very skillfully snapped my right arm downward as he approached me from the side. If I tried to leap up into the air to catch the ball, which was the proper thing for me to do, I found myself standing flat-footed on the ground. I staggered to the side as the ball struck my chest and it rolled out of bounds. If I had been prepared for what was going to happen, I might have caught the ball with one hand. A player, if he is right handed, depends on his right hand in catching a ball on receiving it and then bringing the left up almost simultaneously. When a man is covering the defense in the danger zone, it is advisable for him to stand firm and keep the muscles in both arms taut, especially when he is taking the ball off the backboard after a shot.

There are some players who, when jumping at a held ball, will, instead of striking the ball when it is thrown up by the official, intentionally strike their opponent's right wrist, if he is using his right hand to tap the ball, in order to break the direction of the tap. The player does this when he realizes that his opponent can easily out-jump him, because if he felt otherwise there would be no need of his using this crafty tactic. There are times also when a man who is the equal of his opponent in jumping will take the risk of applying the trick to make doubly sure of the tap. The tricky player will strike the wrist first and then follow-through after the ball to bat it to one of his mates.

Some forwards in their desire to get away from their guards will either grasp an opponent's wrist or pull his shirt to throw him off his balance. On the other hand there are guards who, if they can get close enough, will step upon an opponent's foot for the purpose of delaying him in cutting



for the basket. Naturally the guard will have to be very close to his man to work this trick successfully. It is poor judgment to stay too close to a guard because one should give himself a little more room to get away. On the other hand, if a player will only back up on his guard and then start in on a sprint, he will not give the guard a chance to play any trick on him.

"Legal Blocking" is one of the most important factors in the success of basketball teams. By a legal block I mean intentionally managing to cause an opponent to run into me or to the man playing opposite me to delay him, if only for a second, in his flight to cover his man. I do not lay my hands upon him nor do I apply any intentional bodily contact to bring on this legal block. To illustrate: A and B may be working together on the offense, when suddenly B will run directly in back of A' and continue off to the side of the court, with B' following him. A will swing off in the opposite direction from that in which B and B' are traveling and make a sudden dash for the basket. If the move is timed right by A there is bound to be a momentary collision between A' and either B or B' when A' turns around and tries to catch hold of A as the latter cuts away from him. There are many players who make it their business to manoeuver about the court while their team has possession of the ball and intentionally hip or block-off players of the opposing team. A proficient player will always look from side to side when he is on the defense and be on the look-out for any of his opponents who may purposely be closing in on him for the purpose of starting a block. A player who can be easily blocked is considered a weak defensive man in basketball circles.

Whenever charging into an opponent who has possession of the ball, the player should not be satisfied with making a held ball. He should make a play for the ball if he can. Some strong defensive guards have the uncanny ability of snapping the ball out of their opponent's hands. They charge their man, thrust the left forearm forward to the stomach putting the pressure on the ball, and at the same time they bring their right hand under the ball, thus getting a firm hold with both hands. Once they have their man and are sure that they have the ball firmly in their hands, they draw the upper part of the left shoulder into the movement at the same time and twist and turn to the right in an effort to extract the ball from the opponent's grasp. This movement is done so quickly that it seldom fails once the man gets a firm hold on the ball. The safest way for a



player to protect himself whenever he is charged in this way is to tighten up on the ball and bend his trunk far forward to prevent his opponent from slipping his left arm around the ball.

Playing in Springfield, Mass., two years ago, I happened to observe for the first time a certain player who attracted attention by clever tactics both on the defense and offense. I saw him go down the floor at top speed after an opponent who was cutting for a pass, and just as the man was about to shoot, he struck one of his arms and instantly raised both of his own arms over his head. The raising of his own arms was done to mislead the officials. A player striking the arms of another who is running forward to the basket will have fouls called on him repeatedly for hacking. This player, however, acted his part well. By raising his arms upward soon after he struck his opponent's arm and broke the direction of his shot, he made it difficult for the officials to determine whether or not he had intentionally hacked his man. If a player is in close to his opponent and each has his hands on the ball, he should be as aggressive as he can to prevent his man from taking the ball away. At the same time care must be exercised, for aggressiveness is very apt to lead to the calling of fouls.

The following trick may appear insignificant but it is important and dangerous when properly executed. I place the discussion of the play in this chapter because one element of it may appear questionable to some people, although it is not a flagrant violation of any particular rule. I have cautioned players to back up three yards when they find an opponent playing them too closely. It is a fine thing to remember and it is advisable to change one's style from time to time so that an opponent will not foresee one's move.

As the trick is executed the player draws his man off to the side of the court at a fairly fast pace, comes to a sudden halt, and then draws him to the center of the court with three fast steps to make his opponent believe that he is to continue in that direction. He then makes a rapid, full turn in the opposite direction and cuts for the basket. In performing this act he keeps very close to his opponent. As he turns he holds his arms extended waist high apparently for the purpose of receiving a pass upon completing the movement, but, instead, brushes against the nearest arm of his opponent. This momentary touching of his opponent's arm prevents the guard from turning with him at the instant and therefore gives him the advantage of a yard in

which to beat his man in a sprint to the basket. This intentional touching of an opponent's arm is the questionable element of the play, but it need not be done in a manner to incur a foul.

Generally a man chooses to try this play when the ball is being passed near the center of the court so that he may be able to receive a pass without loss of time. If he attempts the play when the ball is under his opponent's basket, when he turns and gets away, it means that his mates will be compelled to make a long loop pass to him. Usually, however, the play is started when the ball is near the center of the floor or is held by a team-mate outside behind one's own basket.

In a very important league game in which I participated several years ago, I was very much provoked when one of the opposing players batted the ball out of bounds after we had made a basket. We were a few points behind and there were but a few minutes left to play. The officials, in the meantime, stood in the center of the floor calling for the ball. The purpose of my opponent's batting the ball out of bounds was to kill time. By the time the official brought the ball back to center, almost half a minute had been lost. Every member of my team had hurried back to his position after the basket, hoping to get another chance to tie the score. There are officials who will call a foul for delaying the game in this manner; yet this offending player was willing to take the risk of having a foul called on him, figuring that every minute's delay was an advantage to his team.

Last year when the Original Celtics traveled to Coatsville, Pa., to play that team in the Eastern League, the fans that followed the daily accounts of the games were amazed to hear Coatsville, tail-enders in the race, had defeated the Celtics who were leading the league at the time. In that game the Celtics were ahead by the score of 25 to 24 with but three minutes to play. A little while later Lou Sugarman, playing forward for the Coatsville team, threw a basket from mid-floor and put his team in the lead by a point. Soon after the basket was made, Sugarman again got possession of the ball and happened to be fouled by one of my team mates. We took our positions around the foul line, while Sugarman slyly took his time, walking up to the foul line at a slow gait. He assumed his position, looked at the basket for several seconds, bent his trunk as a preliminary move to his shot, then suddenly came to an upright position holding the ball in his left hand, and put his hand to his right eyelid. He appeared to be in distress

as though there was a foreign substance in his eye. Knowing Sugarman as I did, I realized that this little master of the game was only pretending and that his object was to delay the game. There was a time-out called, and the Coatsville players surrounded him in order to give him relief. He soon took his position at the foul line and actually started to repeat the same thing, but this time just touched his eyelid and shot immediately afterward. He missed the shot and as the Celtics were working the ball up the court, the whistle blew for the end of the game.

There are players who will try to disconcert foul shooters. Some will talk to a player incessantly until the ball leaves his hand. In a good-natured way they will josh the shooter and inquire about his financial investments or whether he has received letters from his sweetheart, etc. I have observed others raise a hand and point to one of their mates across the floor and appear to be directing their team mates on the floor. Others will stoop to touch their shins just as the ball is about to leave the shooter's hands. One should not be sensitive to what opponents do in this situation; he should simply concentrate the eye and mind on the basket.

Some players take advantage of every opportunity to have officials call fouls on their opponents through clever acting. If they can draw a foul at a time when a foul is most needed, they consider themselves valuable members of their team. In this respect I recall a player who jumped center for leading professional teams in the east. He gave officials more trouble than any other player in the game because of his ability to draw fouls. At the center play, when the ball was to be thrown up, his plan was to utter a cry of pain on the jump and fall back. Frequently, fouls were called on his opponents for charging on the jump. Of course, the players on the opposing team registered their disapproval of the decision rendered. The official invariably responded: "I'll call my decisions as I see them." Fortunately, as the game proceeded, the official became aware of the trick and thereafter acted accordingly.

Another player used to draw fouls in the following manner: he would run down the floor at a fast pace and just as he was touched by an opponent closing-in rapidly for the ball, he would fall to one side and turn over. In a majority of his attempts, fouls were called on his opponents for charging. Numerous other means are used by players to "draw" fouls. The officials generally have a mighty hard time of it and sometimes they are severally criticized by

players and local newspapers, either for the calling or non-calling of fouls on opposing players.

Stealing of signals by players on the bench plays a very important part in the winning of games. It is true that signals are an important element in team-work but a team playing together ought to accomplish just as much whether they know their opponents' signals or not. There is a story told that Glenn Warner, the great football coach at the University of Pittsburgh, once gave a strong opposing team the signals which his team was going to use against them. When the game was called that Saturday afternoon, every member of the opposing team was well acquainted with the signals and knew just where every play was directed. But the strategy used by the Pittsburgh team and its team work was so effective that they out-played the other team and won by a wide margin.



## SIGNALS

I HAVE always found it best to have a forward rather than a center or a guard give the signals. The reason for this is that the pivot man has the most prominent position on the floor. The players of both teams and spectators as well watch the center circle because it is there that the ball is tossed up. If the center man gives the signals, there is a possibility of their being stolen. Another reason for having a forward giving them is that every man on his team can face him whereas the guards, being behind the center, will not be able to get the signals unless they are too conspicuous.

A team should be ready to change its signals at a moment's notice. It is not necessary to use a new set. Simply pass on the giving of them to another man, as from left forward to right forward. When the change is made the original man should pretend that he is still giving them while he is actually receiving them from the other forward. It is best that both forwards face each other, provided, of course, their doing so doesn't conflict with the signals.

Forwards should not flash their signals too long. The center man should come around to the center position, about two yards in back of the circle, look at the forward giving the signals, and then walk up to his position. All that the forward is interested in is to flash the signals to the center man while it is the duty of every other member of the team to be alert and ready to meet the signals.

Sometimes signals are not seen because opponents are in the way. Should that be the case, as it very often is, one should move to the right or left before the center gets to his position, and set himself for the play. It should be remembered that the forward giving the signals cannot wait to see if other men on his team are ready, but directs his attention to the center man. Occasionally, the man giving the signals should glance about to see just how some of his mates are being played. If the other team has a weak defensive man, it is advisable to direct most of the plays to that part of the court. The same thing is done in football as well as in baseball. In football if the opposing tackle is weak, most quarterbacks will direct their attention to off-tackle plays. Also, in baseball, if a third baseman is a slow man, the opposing team will use a bunting game along that



line. So here, a heady forward should flash signals to obtain the best results.

Direct-taps as well as back-taps, should be assigned to one man before the game gets underway. A forward who is fast and can shoot well under the basket should take the direct-taps, while at all times the left guard should take the back-taps, because he is in a better position to throw the ball with his right hand than is the right guard. Both guards should work together on all back-taps. If the left guard goes to receive the ball, the right guard must swing over directly in back of his mate to cover the defense in case the play goes bad or the ball is intercepted. On the other hand, if the left guard goes in for the ball, he is not always in a position to feed his mates, and in that case all he has to do is to turn slightly to the right and pass the ball to the right guard who is covering and he in turn can make a play if it is not too late.

At a time-out the men should get together and plan the next three plays, so that it will not be necessary for the forward to give the signals.

## SUGGESTED SIGNALS

### Set 1

Forward —Feet together for A.  
              Feet together for B.

Guards —Pull up right side of pants for guard on A's side.  
              Pull up left side of pants for guard on B's side.

Direct-tap—Rub hair all the way back with right hand.

Back-tap —Pull up pants with both hands.

### Set 2

✓ Forward —Look at center and chew gum for A.  
              Look at center and no chewing for B.

Guards —Look away from center to guard on same side,  
              meaning opposite guard is to take tap.  
              Look away from center to the left side of the  
              court, meaning guard on right side of the court  
              will receive tap.

Back-tap —Forward bends his head down before starting  
              play.

Direct-tap—Pull shirt at the neck with the right hand.

### Set 3

Forward —Closed right fist for A.  
Open right hand for B.

Guards —Closed right fist with thumbs extending out to the side to guard on A's side.  
Open right hand, fingers together with thumb extending out to the side of guard on B's side.

Back-tap —Draw right hand slightly back of thigh. Make sure that right hand is out of sight.

Direct-tap—Rub nose with right hand.

### Set 4

Forward —Face front, hands down for A.  
Face opposite side, hands down for B.

Guards —Face front, one hand on hip for guard on A's side.  
Face front, hands on knee for A to pass to guard going down on the same side.  
Face opposite side, same play for forward and guard on the other side.

Direct-tap—Rub chin with right hand.

Back-tap —Rub left wrist with right hand.

### Set 5

Forward —Head down for A.  
Head up for B.

Guards —Bend trunk and rest left hand flat on left knee.  
Right hand on right knee for man on A's side.  
Bend trunk and rest right hand flat on right knee; left hand on left knee for man on B's side.

Back-tap —Pull right ear.

Direct-tap—Rub left shoulder with right hand.

### Set 6

Center giving signals in this play.

Forwards—Center stands with feet together and walks up to the center on the right side for A.  
Center stands with feet together and walks up to the circle on the left side for B.

Guards —Center with right foot pointing slightly outward flashes the signal and walks forward to the center position for guard on A's side.  
Center with left foot pointing slightly outward flashes the signal and walks forward to center position for guard on B's side.

Back-tap —Place right hand momentarily in back of right ear.

Direct-tap—Scratch briskly in back of right ear.

During the flashing of this set of signals, the center man should glance constantly toward either of the forwards as though in the act of receiving the signal from them, in order to distract attention from himself. The forwards should also act as though they are giving the signals.

## TRAINING

IT IS my personal belief after many years of playing and coaching that the greatest asset to a basketball player is speed. Regardless of whether a man knows the finer points of the game, he is considered a dangerous player so long as he is able to travel faster than his opponents. Development of speed, then, should be the primary aim of every person who aspires to excel at the court game.

For the preliminary training period it is therefore suggested that men devote themselves for at least a week solely to track work for the purpose of getting their legs in condition. In my own experience I have observed that players invariably spend little if any time on the track. Their practice from the outset is in scrimmaging or shooting. I would not handle a ball during this period, but would work conscientiously to develop and condition my sprinting apparatus. If a player trains faithfully and diligently in this respect, he will be well repaid for his efforts when the season opens for several reasons: first, he will be able to execute his moves with ease and rapidity; second, there will be a better physical response to his mental operations because of the tenacity of his muscles; third, he will not have to face the drudgery and weariness of overcoming the stiffness which naturally comes to one who must play when not in the proper physical condition.

It is often said in athletic circles that "an athlete lasts as long as his legs hold out." The large muscles of the pelvis, back and thigh are made to do much work. For instance, in the execution of shooting, the whole weight of the trunk is allowed to drop further down than is necessary for the economy of the play, thus burdening the muscles involved with great poundage. Then again the constant shifting, turning, feinting, sudden halts after fast spurts, and just as sudden starts, mean rapid contraction of the extensors of the leg. In the early period of the season let a player do track work and he will avoid much of the unnecessary wear and tear which will otherwise result. Let him practice running, as a boxer in training does, with shifts, feints, short spurts, and sudden stops. It will prepare him for the rapid body adjustments necessary when in action.

During the training period it is advisable for a player, after completing his daily work-out, to rub his legs thoroughly with a combination of witch-hazel, alcohol, and soap liniment to prevent stiffness. After the playing season is well under way this is unnecessary because the leg muscles are by this time "toned." In the early part of a campaign basketball players often experience what is known in athletic circles as a "charley-horse." This is no more than a cramp due to a contraction of the leg muscles against the nerve, owing to a lack of blood supply, which causes intense pain. When this comes on, rub and massage that area vigorously so as to create normal heat and draw the circulation back through these parts.

Hot lemonade or hot tea is a splendid drink for a man to take after a basketball game. The tendency on the part of most players is to take something cold into their systems. There is no greater detriment to the proper functioning of the kidneys and stomach than for one to take a cold drink when one's body is all heated. Expert hikers, understanding the disadvantages of drinking cold water on the road, advise using a hot beverage regardless of the temperature of the day.

Eat good, wholesome food, and see to it that there is plenty of bulk to balance the amount of energy burnt up in practice. I have been in a position to observe that the greatest care must be taken by an athlete in the matter of food. As a rule it is best to omit strong, spicy food from the menu and also such dishes as will heat the blood, especially before a game. One word of warning, however, concerning meat. One square meal of meat is sufficient per day for any man. A great failing in athletes is that they eat too much of it. Meat, especially beef, contains in considerable quantities poisonous substances known as "purin bodies," which are difficult to eliminate from the system, and if taken in excess, cause a considerable overstrain upon the organs of excretion, the kidneys. If taken in inordinate quantities, they are retained within the body and cause fatigue, rheumatic pains, and later pernicious difficulties. These poisonous substances, induced through too much meat, are sufficient in themselves to cause discomfort; but when in the strenuously trained athlete the result of wear and tear of muscle has also to be got rid of from the system, it will be easily understood what excessive work is to be performed by the organs of excretion. Every athlete should adopt the policy of leaving the dining table prior to a



game feeling that he can eat a little more. If he does so, he may consider himself fit for competition.

Avoid late hours and any form of dissipation which may use up one's energy. Basketball when played conscientiously brings on decided fatigue. A tired man cannot make a good player. The game requires every bit of one's stored up energy which comes only through clean living, wholesome food and rest. The man who can display a greater degree of endurance is rated higher in the game of basketball than the player who possesses an accurate eye but lacks the other quality.

Many opinions, pro and con, have been voiced on the subject of smoking by athletes. One often hears it said that "so and so," a great athlete, perhaps the world's champion, used tobacco almost incessantly; that before his games or races he smoked several cigarettes even in uniform and then proceeded to shatter records. Such stories are common and there may perhaps be some truth in them. But the fact of the matter is that the average man cannot smoke during a playing season and maintain a good "wind," which is a concomitant of endurance, as he can by avoiding tobacco. My advice to players, particularly the younger ones, is that they do not smoke during the basketball season.

## ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS

1—When playing, wear heavy woolen socks with footless stockings to prevent blistering.

2—Don't train to a state of exhaustion. Work in gradually even if another week is required.

3—Dry your chest, head and ears thoroughly after a shower. October generally has changing weather, so it is advisable to add an extra undershirt to avoid colds.

4—Always carry a cake of soap in your bag. After a game, don't fail to soap beneath the arms and crotch to prevent boils. Remember that boils have a tendency to crop out wherever hair is present.

5—If you wrench an ankle, strap it with adhesive tape and keep it on for about a week. Do not remove it when you bathe, but dry well and thoroughly.

6—Rope-skipping is an excellent substitute for track work during the training or off-season. When conditions are not ideal for running, you will find the results extremely satisfactory.

7—Carry an iodine pen in your bag, and apply to scratches as soon as the game is over to avoid festering. If you are in good condition scratches will heal over night. If they do not, keep applying iodine.

8—If you are compelled to play with a sprained finger, strap that finger to the adjoining one with adhesive tape so as to lessen the tension of the injured member.

9—Keep your nails cut short.

10—Some colors used in dying stockings and jerseys are poisonous. It is therefore well to wear white shirts and stockings next to the skin to prevent blood-poisoning or boils. All athletic wearing-apparel should be washed frequently.

11—Do not wear tight-fitting guards or garters to hold up the stockings, as they interfere with the proper circulation of the blood and often cause cramps.

12—Do not use stimulants of any kind.

13—If a game is to be played on a slippery floor, apply vaseline or kerosene to the suction cups. If your shoes have no suction cups, use vaseline on the surface of the rubber sole.

## HINTS TO PLAYERS

**W**HENEVER a trick play is consummated against you, try to remember it for future use. During a game your opponent will "pull" something which may cause your team to lose two points, a basket, and sometimes the game. If you are an aggressive, active player, the trick "pulled" on you will make an indelible impression, and you will be watchful in future contests to prevent its recurrence. I have discussed some of these incidents in the chapter entitled "Questionable Tricks of the Game."

Disregard remarks made to you or to any other member of your team while you are in action. Set your heart and mind on the game and not upon the prattle and talk of individuals on the side-lines. Nothing is more destructive to a man's efficiency than to listen to remarks made by spectators. Let them do the talking and nagging; in time they will grow tired. The worst thing you can do is to stop to converse or argue with them. Some spectators seat themselves directly near the basket and deliberately keep their tongues wagging loosely throughout the game, especially when a free throw is tried after a foul is called. At times their talk proves very effective because the foul shooter, being extremely high strung, enters into a war of words. Retorts of this kind usually result in loss of control and failure to score the point. Opposing players who are quick to realize this weakness will start a persistent chatter whenever the garrulous type of player goes to shoot a foul. One must practise self-control more in the game of basketball than in any other sport. In baseball and football the spectators are generally at some distance from the players and personal remarks are seldom heard; but in basketball the spectators are within six feet of the outside of the court. Hence, intensive concentration on the game is essential. Play the game as checker players do. They do not take their eyes or minds off the board. So here, don't take your eyes off the court. A noted writer once said, "Gossip is simply the outburst of envy and malice—like a Chinese fire cracker—often a fizz and usually dangerous only to him that explodes it." Take heed!

Successful shooters are those who have confidence in their shot. There are some men who will go ahead at a steady pace and suddenly fall by the wayside, simply because some

one told them that they were not shooting up to their standard and that they were slipping. True, occasionally a man may be in a slump, and yet, the fact that he becomes conscious of his weakness causes him to fall down entirely. Take stock of yourself. Ask yourself the following question: "When I shoot, do I give my shots the proper height? Am I hurrying my shot? Am I trying to get the ball away too quickly instead of gauging my distance? When I shoot is there too much force from one hand instead of equal pressure with both? Am I holding the ball too tightly instead of putting the pressure and thumb evenly on the ball? Is my body well balanced?" Aside from confidence, the success of a shooter depends upon his ability to pass instantly from a state of action to repose! And herein lies the deadly effectiveness. Such a man is more to be dreaded than any other because of his control over every nerve and muscle in his movement. It is a rifle action carried to a point of perfection. He simply throws the clutch and makes his mind control every muscle, nerve, pulse-beat and spark in his body.

A basketball player should take a nap before each game. If the time does not permit, make it your business *to keep off your feet*. If you feel rested, you will play well. There may be times when to play a game of basketball is the last thing in the world you would care to do. That is your feeling before the game. But once you get started, and commence to perspire, and your muscles become toned, you forget about things and unconsciously pass up any thought about your feelings. Whenever I travelled away from home to play or if I accompanied the college basketball team on a trip, I always arranged to arrive at the place where we were scheduled to play an hour or two before game time in order to allow time for a short nap. I have observed closely the playing of the men on the college team on the days they took a nap before playing and on days when they were not able to lie down for a while previous to their game. The difference in their playing was noticeable. In my personal experience, I find that I can play a more aggressive game if I take a nap before playing time, than when going without it.

Play hard and don't look for trouble. Basketball is a game where there is a great deal of personal contact, and where self-control is a very important factor. The player who is very sensitive to fouls committed by his opponent, such as hacking, pushing, or charging, is the one who will crumble in a pinch. Learn to take punishment without seeking vengeance. I recall a man with whom I played a great deal during the past three years. This man was an unusually good



basketball player and remarkably fast on his feet. I used to see his opponent's slug and trip him at times in an effort to stop him from scoring, but not once do I recall that this man retaliated. He realized that the tripper, the slugger, and the unfair player of any sort, is usually despised by his own team-mates to whose advantage his tactics might naturally redound. If the coach and captain are the right kind, they will force an unfair player to change his tactics or leave the team. H. L. Smith writes of an athletic failure and says, "There used to be a player on a certain football team who was as quick as lightning, a lover of the game, and a great ground gainer. But let it happen that this player was thrown hard at the start of the game or accidentally hit in any way, he would begin to fight. Week after week, this player, who might have proved a tower of strength to his college team, was ruled out of the game for open fighting. He absolutely lacked self-control at critical moments and was allowed to play only at the start of each game that he might make a few yards before he lost his head." Learn to master yourself and remember that a man without self-control is like a barrel without hoops; it soon tumbles to pieces!

Play the game for the game's sake and beware of gamblers and their influences. I cite here a personal incident in which I was involved while playing in Greenville, N. J. A group of men used to get together every Saturday evening when games were scheduled and form a "pool" for betting on the members of the two teams. Each one of the spectators in the pool would receive a number corresponding to that of one of the players. The man whose number was highest scorer in the game won the pool. It was most disheartening to me to observe "sport gamblers" tamper with some of the players and try to bribe them. One night I distinctly heard one of them call out to me, "Say, Nat, I picked you tonight, old boy. Work hard!" My pride was hurt. I recall distinctly not having scored a single point all through that game. I played a strong game on the defense and my passing was good, but my shooting was purposely off color. Pass, pass, that's what I did all through the game, but nary a shot did I take for the basket. From that night on, I never heard any of these men beckon to me for any help. It was Herbert Kaufman, in the *Cosmopolitan*, who said, "The man who isn't straight puts a terrific handicap upon himself. He must play tug-of-war single-handed against all society."

Don't ever underestimate the strength of another team. Confidence is a mighty good thing, but overconfidence will bring on many an unexpected defeat. I have seen many



supposedly weak teams beat strong combinations. In order to win games, you have to earn the victories through hard work. The fact that you are highly praised for the wonderful records you have made in past performances does not mean that your future games are to be won with little effort. It is just in games of this kind, where the men on the good team lead all through the first half and where each man figures on drawing away from the opposing team with ease in the second half, that upsets occur. I have never seen it to fail that men who have figured that way have met with sad disappointment. "All men are alike! All teams are good! None are weak!" That should be the feeling of every man on the team.

A player who is conscious of his weakness will never play up to true form in competition. Players often worry too much about the visiting team. As a matter of fact they are actually beaten before the game starts. Let the other fellow worry about you. That's the slogan to follow! Some teams worry so much about the shooting ability of certain players on the visiting team, that during the course of the game every man on the team concentrates on the "star," thus breaking up their own regular style of play. Play your game as you know best, and play it hard. Disregard any comments that are made in the newspapers or verbal statements passed on from interested fans about the strength of the opposing team. You may not believe it, but the other team is also worrying about you.

Don't carry yourself aloof from the rest of the members of your team because you are superior to them at the game. Mix well with your men at all times. It will not only help towards solidifying your friendship with them but it will help team-work. There may be certain men on your team with whom you do not care to associate; yet, you must always remember that you have to receive unselfish cooperation from every man on the team in order to win games consistently. Make up your mind to know better that one man whom you dislike. Help him if you can. Since you have to live and play together with that man during the course of the season you may as well make the best of it. To grow moody and say unpleasant things to the other men on the team about this man or that man, will certainly not help your standing in the eyes of your team-mates.

The player who knows how to conserve his energy at the proper time instead of burning it up throughout the game will not only play a better game but will last for many years as a strong player. Basketball is a game of endurance.

Judicious team-work and conservation of movements will help you survive. Some players put every ounce of energy into their game and at the final whistle they are totally exhausted. I have observed players on college basketball teams retire to the locker room after games in a deathly state of fatigue. Some of them actually fainted. If the game is close, it may be necessary for you to plug away at a good pace. However, if your team is well in the lead, there is no reason why you should not let up for awhile—I do not mean loaf—to regain your wind. If you can, get your teammates to work so that when one man does the cutting-in for the basket, the rest of the men can nurse their wind along, and after he gets back, some one else can work the ball up the court. You have to learn to conserve your energy, so that you can call upon your reserve at opportune moments regardless how hard you have been playing and how fast you have been running. There are men who keep crossing from side to side, passing the ball to one another in rapid-fire motion, all of which is done in the backfield, and when they get in around the foul line, they haven't enough strength left to outspurt their opponent to the basket. Bring the ball up the court at a fairly good pace; but do not indulge in unnecessary dodging, feinting and sprinting from side to side in the backfield. Wait until you are within reasonable distance of your basket, and then let out with great speed. You will then find that you will have enough reserve in you to get away from your opponent and also enough endurance to come back on the defense in case the other team gets possession of the ball.

As a player you ought never to regard yourself inferior to any member of your team or to any man on the opposing team. Once you get into that state of mind where you consider the other man your superior you certainly are not going to play your best game. Make up your mind from the beginning that you are the equal if not the superior of any other player on the court. I recall when I first broke into the professional game that I was called upon to play guard against one of the greatest forwards in the East, a man who had all the qualifications for the position of forward. He was an exceptionally fast runner, could cut for the basket with remarkable speed, was a dead shot at the basket, a versatile floor man, and in addition to it all, had ten years of experience in fast company. There was I, lad of nineteen, with but one month of professional experience, playing against a man whom I regarded as far superior to myself. That thought alone affected my playing ability, and I am

obliged to admit that I did not play up to my standard in that game. That taught me a lesson. I made up my mind after that game that in the future, whenever I played against an opponent, no matter if he was heralded as the greatest player from coast to coast, I would consider myself no less than his equal. I do not worry about any man in basketball today. I conquered fear by auto-suggestion considering myself on a par with the best men in the game.

A good player should always seek pointers for the purpose of perfecting his game. Don't be satisfied with yourself. In basketball, as in baseball, there are men who play the game for many years and never seem to make any progress. There are players who are "stars" on their high school team and who fail to make their college team. There are men who play baseball in the minor leagues but fail to make the big leagues. They may lack experience; they may not have the mentality; they may not have the physique. Or I might attribute their failure to the fact that these men do not seek "pointers". They are satisfied. Several years back, when I played with the Bridgeport team of the Connecticut League, my attention was first called to the value of talking matters over after a game. On the way back to the city after my first game with Bridgeport, the entire team got together and talked about the game. We discussed the faults disclosed in the game that night, and in our future games we tried to correct them. We also talked about various good moves, whether they were about plays from the tap-off, or the manner in which some one player was guarded, or the generalship of the opposing captain. I have yet to meet a more interested or more attentive group. Each man was eager to improve his game and made a mental note of everything that was discussed. The rapid strides that some of these players have made during the past five years leads me to believe firmly that a player who is constantly seeking "pointers" is bound to improve his game. The high school star and the star of the bush leagues are good men for their respective divisions, but they go no further unless they seek to develop.

Play the game for all that it is worth and not to satisfy certain alumni, gamblers, backers, and rooters. Play clean and hard and in true sportsmanlike fashion. Some fans are interested in the winning of games regardless whether they are won fairly or unfairly. It does not concern them who the players are that are representing the team, or who the men are that are making a sacrifice in an effort to bring on the best possible team-work. As long as the team wins,

they are satisfied. It is natural for college alumni to take pride in the victories of teams representing their Alma Mater. They must not, however, in their yearning for victory sacrifice principle. When they do, we often hear of scandal in college institutions where prominent members of the alumni have financed athletes through college and made possible the so-called "tramp-athlete." They have a pernicious influence on college competition and on sport in general.

Be a sportsman at all times, and if a decision is given against you, don't growl at the officials. If you lose to a better team, or, even by "bad luck" to an inferior team, don't make excuses. It won't improve your case or alter the result and will only lead others to class you as a poor sportsman.

Sport writers have a great deal of influence upon the minds of those who are interested in athletics. Generally, sport writers know their game well; they have to or they could not hold down their jobs. Often they know more about the game than the players themselves do. But many of the daily articles on college athletics and accounts of games are written not by newspaper reporters but by college students who are paid at space rates. More often than not, they know so little about the game that their statements are not authoritative. There are times when they will boost some undeserving player or under-rate the ability of a star. Players who pay attention to such write-ups are very apt to injure the efficiency of their team-play. **DON'T LET A NEWSPAPER ACCOUNT OF A GAME AFFECT YOUR PLAYING!** Regardless what newspaper accounts say of your individual ability, play always for the interest of the entire team. The following quotation taken from a recent article from Cullen Cain, the well-known sport writer of the Philadelphia *Public Ledger*, sums up the question admirably: "How often, oh, how often, do we 'kid' ourselves along with the fond thoughts and vain pride of some extra flash we unleashed in our behalf, believing always that the steady, regular, conscientious, whole-hearted, loyal, all-that-is-in-us work we do, along with others, is unnoticed and unsung. We are all wrong. No real work for the good of all ever failed of a fine reward. Even if the powers that be missed it, and they miss but little in their keen glances for real and constant effort, why, deep in our hearts cometh the reward in the form of that little glow that warms and makes a restless and weary heart happy at the end of the day."



## GREAT PLAYERS AND REASONS FOR THEIR GREATNESS

**M**Y AIM in this chapter is not so much to pick an "all-star" team as to point out to my readers the individual characteristics that have brought fame to some men as basketball players. These men have all had professional careers and have also made a thorough study of the game. Although there are many other men who are worthy of being discussed in this connection, I feel that the men treated below stand out as the greatest basketball players during the fifteen years that I have been with the game.

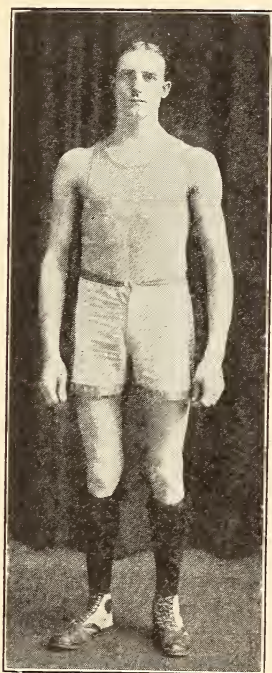
Every sport possesses thousands of players whose ability entitles them to special attention. Some men excel in speed, others in endurance, and others in brain power. Some even attain that state of perfection where they possess almost all of these characteristics which entitle them to the rank of a star. Yet, so few of them can be selected who over a period of ten to fifteen years may be regarded as having so far outdistanced the rest of the field as to be placed in a class by themselves. What qualities do these men have that have brought to themselves such stellar honors? What signal athletic abilities have characterized the style of their game which young men of today can profitably emulate? The purpose of this chapter is to point out these very factors so that others may benefit thereby.

My first selection is that of Ed Wachter who is unquestionably the greatest center man that ever wore a basketball uniform. He has had the most exceptional basketball career that I know of. During the twenty-four years in which he played active ball, he was a member of more championship basketball outfits than any other player since the game has come into existence. He played on the "E" Company team of Schenectady when it won the World's Championship at Kansas City in 1905 by defeating the Blue Diamonds of that section. He was with the famous Troy team which won the championship of the old New York State and Hudson River Leagues, which played Reading for the World's Championship in 1911, and later made its famous trip to the Pacific Coast winning thirty-seven consecutive games. He also played with the Pittsfield Bike Club when it won a championship, with the Mechanicsville team when it won the cham-



pionship of the Northern New York League, with the McKeesport five when it won the championship of the Central Pennsylvania League, with Albany when it won the New York League Championship, and with Cohoes when it also won the Championship of the New York State League. Since taking up the game of basketball, Wachter has participated in more than 1800 contests, and has been the leading scoring center in every league in which he played. In a great many instances he was the greatest individual point-getter.

As a basketball coach also he has met with marked success, having been in charge of the squads at the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, 1915-16, Williams College 1916-1920, Harvard 1920-22.



ED WACHTER.

Wachter was always a very aggressive player and a most versatile floor man. He had an inexhaustible supply of energy and endurance, being able to play incessantly and indefatigably both halves without any time-outs. His style of

play was such that he was almost too slippery to handle and exceedingly difficult to block. He was especially successful in spectacular long shots as well as at free throws from the foul line. Well do I recall this man coming down the floor at top speed, receiving a pass from one of his mates, suddenly whirling his body to the left or right and calmly raising the ball to the proper height for its course through the net, and then sprawl headlong into the corner of the court. As a center man he was rather short in comparison with other men who play that position. He stood about 5.11 in his stocking feet, but he was an excellent jumper, well able to leap at the proper time and get away for a fast break directly after the tap. He was a heady player and always tried to figure out what his opponents were going to do while he was on the defense. His greatest asset on the offense was his speed and his daring plunges for the basket. in following up a shot taken by one of his mates. During the halves, he always led the discussions in the dressing room, pointing out faults to his men, always tactful in his criticism. He was a leader who possessed a magnetic personality and together with his unusual ability he has gained for himself a reputation in basketball circles as the greatest basketball player in the game. As for his character, The Troy Record said, "Personally, Wachter is one of the most likeable of men. He has a host of friends who view with interest his advancement. He bears a high reputation here because of his excellent character and habits and few citizens are so popular. He is delightfully companionable, a man of high ideals, always a gentleman."

Summarizing Wachter's fame as a basketball player, one should note the following things: he never passed the ball away foolishly; his passes were short and snappy; he was aggressive and played the game for all that it was worth; he followed up the ball whenever one of his mates took a shot for the basket, if he was near enough. When his side got hold of the ball, he generally helped work the ball up the field rapidly and prevented his opponents from getting set. He was an excellent floor man and a wonderful leader of men. He had all the confidence a leader should have and instilled it in his men. His name will live forever in the hall of fame of basketball.

Prominent among the forwards are three men who are acknowledged to be the fastest and cleverest men who have ever played this position. First of these is the late Jack Inglis, a resident of Troy, New York, who played with

Wachter on the Troy team of the New York State Basketball League, which held the championship of the world for three years. He was a star football player on the Lansingburgh High School team and played on the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute eleven during the years he was at that college. He coached the football team at Colgate University in 1915 and in 1916 coached the R. P. I. football and basketball teams. The basketball fans were shocked to hear of the



JACK INGLIS.

death during the influenza epidemic on October 6, 1918, of this noted basketball player. The following day, October 7, the Scranton Paper published a brief sketch of his career. It read as follows: "In the death of Jack Inglis, basketball loses one of its greatest stars. For years he ranked as one of its real headliners, and in this section was generally conceded to be the best drawing card ever seen in action on the basketball floors. Inglis gained his basketball start with the schools around Troy, N. Y., and later entered the

New York State League starring in that circuit when it was recognized as one of the leading basketball circuits in the country. When the New York State Circuit disbanded, Inglis accompanied Andy Suils to Carbondale, where he starred for the Pioneers in two campaigns. He played forward on the team that brought the pennant to Carbondale two years ago. In that campaign Inglis ranked as the leading scorer in the state league, topping the circuit in throwing field goals by a substantial margin."

Inglis justified all claims to stardom and proved to be one of the best dribblers that the game has ever developed. He handled the ball with such dexterity and skill that it was a revelation to his opponents as well as to spectators to see him move down the court. Very few men in the game were able to hold him. He was so fast that he was able to slip away from his pursuers like the morning mist, and a basket was sure to follow for his team. Like a streak of blue lightning, he used to race down the court with the most deceptive dodging that was ever seen on any court.

Inglis had a mild temperament. He was always easy-going, cheerful, congenial, and his mind was always at ease. This was quite noticeable even on the court, for in the heat of the game he was calm and determined and always played up to true form. To my mind, Inglis made more spectacular shots with a varied degree of consistancy, than any other player will ever be able to duplicate. What pleasant memories he brings back to my mind! How I enjoyed seeing this rugged and fearless player dash down the court, suddenly twist his trunk to receive a pass from one of his mates, and with body off the ground cling to the ball, stretch his right arm upward, and calmly shoot the ball through the net! He was a heady player and a wonderful team man. He never hesitated to throw the ball back to one of his mates when he had rushed down the court and received a poor pass, rather than shoot from a difficult angle and lose possession of the ball.

In conclusion we must note that Inglis was ranked in the premier category because he was a master of dribbling, an excellent shooter, a wonderful team man, steady, aggressive, sure and fast of foot, and had a well regulated mind.

The next man of note playing the forward position is John Beckman who has often proved that he is as fast a basketball player as has ever worn regalia in the Eastern League. His first connection was with the Christ Church team of New York in the inter-settlement leagues. Shortly after he joined the St. Gabriel Five, at that time the best



middleweight team in greater New York. It was at this time that Beckman really branched out as a first class forward, a position in which he is really unequalled. He then entered the Hudson River League, representing Kingston, and was the main factor in their winning the championship. A year later, he was transferred to Paterson, New Jersey, where he played for a while until he moved on to Philadelphia and represented the De Neri Club in the Eastern League. He later joined the Nanticoke team in the Penn State League and starred with them for two years. Last season,



JOHNNY BECKMAN.

he lead the Penn State League in scoring and starred as forward on the Original Celtics. He was instrumental in bringing the championship to the Celtics who took first place in the Eastern League during the season of 1921-22.

Beckman's greatest asset is his speed and his ability to shoot baskets from mid-floor. He can always be depended upon



to get the ball down the court no matter how many opponents are trying to block him or head him off. He is like a juggernaut, impossible to stop unless by foul means. His long strides make for speed and serve to carry him successfully out of many tight places. He, too, is a master of dribbling, throwing the ball rather low and quite some distance ahead of him. For the past five years, Beckman has led the Penn State and Eastern Leagues in scoring. Spectators have been amazed at his exhibitions at times when his team has been facing defeat. To see this lion-hearted, fearless, and aggressive player go forward and pluck the game from the fire, has not been an unusual sight to many thousands who have watched Beckman in action. There have been many occasions on which I have played in games with this player with the score uncomfortably close and little time to go. A foul would be called and the result often hinged on the foul toss. Many of the fans would cheer and others would make efforts to disconcert the shooter. The average player being in so critical a position as that would be nervous, anxious and distracted. But Beckman would stand at the foul line with his eye on the basket, cool and self-possessed, would throw his foul as though he were in a practice game. He has the confidence and his mind is on the game. Intense concentration has brought deserved honors to this player.

I was always curious to peep in behind his cranium plates just to see what kind of machinery was there. I know about his outward limbs and flourishes, but no player can tell about his spark and his wiring until he has been tested by tension amid oppositions and cheers. Such is Beckman who knows how to stand the test.

Another outstanding feature about Beckman is his ability to take punishment in action. He does not believe in retaliating, knowing that if he does, he is taking his mind off his game. He can be rough and he can show fight, but that is not his policy. "Keep your mind on the game," he has told his men incessantly. Finally, he knows how to conserve his energy. When the score is close, he will work hard in an effort to overcome his opponents, but when his team has a comfortable lead, he will let up considerably. This strategy enables him to pull himself together, so that when the time comes for him to let-out, he can call on his stored-up energy.

In a consideration of what this player has accomplished, we should observe carefully those qualities that have brought

him honors. They are his ability to conserve his energy for use at the proper time, his remarkable speed, his aggressiveness, his excellent shooting ability from distance and from the short line, and his equanimity of mind in action.

The third forward to be discussed is Barney Sedran, who to my mind is the brainiest basketball player with whom I have ever come in contact. Sedran's career as a basketball player commenced at the University Settlement of New York where he played for a number of years while still a mere boy. He then entered Townsend Harris High School and played on their championship team for three



BARNEY SEDRAN.

years. Soon after graduation he enrolled as a student at the College of the City of New York where he played on the Varsity team for two consecutive years. Later the team representing the University Settlement branched off for themselves and went out on the road, playing exhibition games against strong professional teams. It was during this trip that he was signed up to play with the Newburgh team in the Hudson River League, where he was soon recognized as a sensational forward. He helped considerably in bringing the championship to Newburgh that year. The fol-

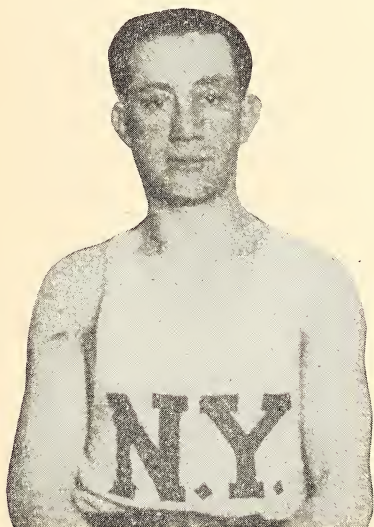
lowing year, 1916, he contracted with the Utica Team of the New York State League, and proceeded to win individual honors as high point scorer in the league, besides aiding in winning the championship. Two years later, he represented Jasper in the Eastern League, and after a thrilling set of games in their post-season series with Greystock, Jasper was barely nosed out by their opponents for the championship. During the season of 1920, he represented Albany in the New York State League and also played with Easthampton in the "Carpet League" of Massachusetts. Albany won the championship for two consecutive years and Sedran led the league by a wide margin in point scoring each time.

All through his career Sedran has played a brilliant brand of basketball. His floor work is phenomenal. His shooting under all difficulties has been sensational. In my opinion, he is the greatest man that has ever been developed for advancing the ball down the court. No matter how well he is covered by his opponents, he always manages to find a way of evading them. He picks his openings unusually well and uses each one to the best advantage. Seldom does he get in close to his opponent but tactfully manoeuvres about the players until the time comes for him to cut for the basket. He is very shifty and as a result is able to mislead many a player. He is most feared at a set shot. It is an almost certain score any time that Sedran stands alone off to the side, irrespective of the angle, with the ball in his possession. It is most interesting to observe this player in action and see how skillfully he handles the ball. He will sway his arms from side to side and seldom permit his opponents to strike the ball away from him. One would think that he would be handicapped because of his physical disadvantages, being short in stature and light in weight, but his keen mind overcomes all difficulties. As the years move on, thousands of spectators who have seen the "rabbit," as he is called, in action will join with me in declaring him the smartest player that has ever played basketball.

Summing up, we find this player's strong points are his ability to mislead his opponents on the offense, his dexterity in handling the ball, his success as a "feeder" of his teammates, his marvelous shooting, his skill on both offense and defense. He always manages to get back on the defense in time to cover, should his team lose possession of the ball on the offense. Lastly, his evenness of temper in all matches enables him to function well for the benefit of his team.

In the guard positions, Marty Friedman and Andy Suils are the two men I propose to discuss. Marty Friedman I openly declare to be the greatest guard of all time. He and Barney Sedran, who have been inseparable friends since early childhood, have played on the same teams for the past twelve years and it has been said they practically compose a team in themselves.

Friedman's phenomenal playing for the past ten years has earned for him the reputation of being unquestionably the greatest guard in the game. He is cool and collected while in action. He studies his own men as well as his



MARTY FRIEDMAN.

opponents all the time. He is a team man all the way through, and sacrifices all for the team. For five consecutive years Barney Sedran led the various leagues in which he played, and followers of basketball attribute his success to Friedman's wonderful feeding and blocking. Friedman's ability to pick out noticeable weaknesses in his opponents and to direct his attack in that direction has brought many a victory to his team. His strategy has been most effective. However, we must not overlook Friedman's ability to shoot. Though he plays a defensive position, he is the most dangerous man to leave unguarded. He is a dead set shot



from the distance. He, also, is very clever in working his way in and around the basket with his men by means of short, snappy passes. When the opportunity presents itself, he dribbles in fast and takes the shot. He is a most dependable backfield man and an exceptionally proficient shooter. Of all his qualities, I personally attribute Friedman's success to his clean living. He fully realizes the value of rest to an athlete and generally makes it his duty to get to bed early. He is very careful in his choice of foods and never drinks or smokes. From the minute the whistle blows to the end of the game, he is always on the go. He has an abundance of energy, all of which is due to intelligent training.

Hence we find that it is worth noting the traits that have brought on this man's success. His calm temperament, his sacrifices for the benefit of his team, his ability to look for weak spots and to take advantage of them, his strategy, his being an excellent shot, his dependability at picking men off who come through uncovered, his habit of planning the attack before the game and in between the halves, make Friedman a good, smart player.

In Andy Suils, basketball fans have found a most sterling type of guard. No man has ever sacrificed more individual honors, applause, or newspaper praise for the benefit of his team than has Suils. "Silent Andy" is what the fans call him. The Scranton paper of November 27, 1919, gave the following account of his career: "Andy Suils, manager and guard of the Carbondale basketball team is a firm believer in the old adage 'Silence is Golden.' In fact, there are some Carbondale fans who believe Andy is the author of the phrase. However, during the stress of the battle, Andy was not very silent; it was after the battle was over that Andy held counsel with himself, and himself alone. His familiar, 'make 'em short' and 'don't lose that ball,' were a part of the games at the armory. He started his career many moons ago with the famous old Twenty-third Street Y.M.C.A. team of New York City. Later he played with the St. Peter's Five of the same city. After a splendid season with them, he joined the Union Hill team of New Jersey. At the end of two seasons with Union Hill, he contracted with the South Side Pittsburgh Club of the Central League. The South Side team at that time was one of the best teams in the United States. Two years later he bid adieu to his mates at Pittsburgh and traveled to Troy where he took advantage of an attractive offer from Lew Wachter,



who was manager of the never-to-be-forgotten Troy Team of the New York State League. Suils is undoubtedly one of the best guards ever developed in basketball, barring none. He is a basketball player that lives cleanly and carefully. He is playing as good a brand of ball today if not better than he did five years ago."

If unselfishness in a game were round dollars, Andy Suils would be a multi-millionaire over and over again. Even if he does manage to make his way under the enemy's basket,



ANDY SUILS.

he will deliberately pass the ball to a brother player rather than try himself. For many years he led the Penn State League as well as the New York State League in assists. In his career he has made three times as many assists as any other player in the circuit. After a game, whether his team won or lost, he has always been the same quiet Andy, ready and willing to point out the weak

and strong points of the opposition and of his own team. He has fitted in with his team-mates like a hand in a glove. Jack Inglis was made great primarily because of Suils' feeding in the backfield.

There were times when Suils' playing was criticized by basketball fans and players for his failure to do things on the offense. "Wonderful defensive man but poor on the offense", would be some of the comments. It is my firm belief that every basketball team should have a player like Suils, one who will stay back to do the feeding, and be dependable at all times. The fault with the average player today is that he wants to score, and if he doesn't, his friends may think that he is slipping. They do not fully realize the advantage of team-play, and that cooperation and individual sacrifice are the basic factors toward the success of any team. Just think of Suils in this connection. Suils was conscientious and earnest about his work. If his team was in the lead, he disliked seeing his men loaf and take things for granted. He realized the possibilities of his opponents' coming through at the last moment. He was the one who originated the expression, "Get off that dime or I'll get you a rocking chair." Players who are inclined to loaf thoroughly understand the meaning of the phrase.

## GENERAL HINTS TO COACHES

**T**O COACH a basketball team successfully a coach must be gifted with personality, must have a thorough knowledge of the game, and must be familiar with coaching methods. To direct a team the coach must have the ability to inspire the players with the spirit of team work, with grit, and the will to win fairly. He must maintain the morale of the players on a high level so that they will practise faithfully and train diligently. A playing knowledge of the game, a formidable defense and offense, and smooth team work can be secured only by months of regular practice, intelligently conducted.

Not a little of the success of any basketball team depends upon the ability of the coach to impart his knowledge of the fine points of the game to the players under him. Practically every man who is chosen to coach a team has been a star player at one time or another, and if his success as a coach were to be measured by his playing ability there would be little doubt as to his developing strong teams. Comparatively few men are able to impart the knowledge which they have gained through practical experience. Then, there are many who, though possessing that ability, attain only mediocre results because of their improper handling of men. The coach who possesses a combination of all three, practical playing experience, ability to impart knowledge properly, and ability to handle men, will be rewarded with greater success than one lacking any of these requirements.

The question naturally arises, what is the proper method of imparting knowledge to players and what is the proper way of handling men? I suppose a gross of methods may be advanced. During the course of this chapter various suggestions both as to teaching methods and the handling of men are offered which I have found to be efficient in the conduct of practice sessions and of games.

When your candidates are called out for the squad, try to arrange to have all the men dress together in a certain part of the dressing room so that they can *talk basketball* before and after games.

Regardless how large your squad may be, try to arrange to have a short scrimmage for all who are able to play. Hustle players through and allow no loafing or fooling.

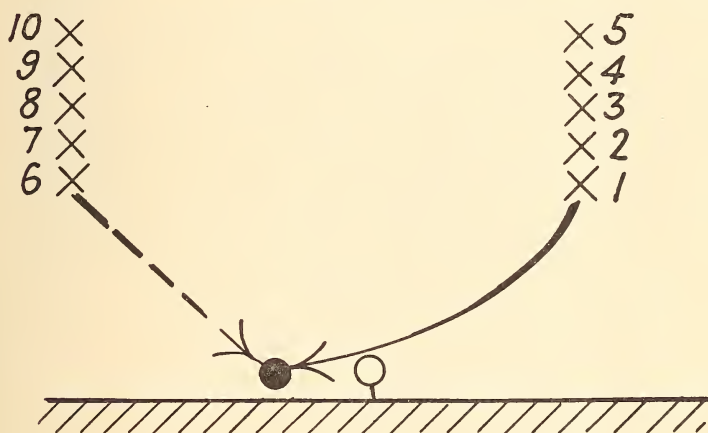
After you have weeded down the squad and you have two and three teams scrimmaging against each other several times a week, take notes of the faults of the individual players during the scrimmage. Don't interrupt the players during practice to point out their faults. Let them play a full twenty minutes so that they will be able to regulate their game according to half-time. When you have their faults jotted down, have the manager typewrite them on a sheet of paper and hand copies of them to the players and yourself. By doing this, a player will remember his faults and try to correct them.

You can set aside one day each week for the men to play through continuously without being stopped. Have the regulars play against the scrub team A for the first half and team B for the second half. On the other days of practice, you can stop your men from time to time during the scrimmage and correct their faults. Speak loudly enough so that it will not be necessary for you to repeat the same thing to another man five minutes later. Then again, the men sitting on the side lines can gain a great deal through observation. Do not permit your scrubs to shoot around at another part of the gymnasium during practice. If a man is trying for the position of forward, he should watch the style and manner of one of the forwards on the first team. The first string forward has certain qualities which the scrub has not, and in addition he can point out the bad faults of the regulars and so, through observation, help to perfect his game. Make comparisons.

I have found it of great advantage to use a small crew megaphone during scrimmages. Have one of the assistant managers throw the ball up at center and at held-balls. You can station yourself somewhere along the outsides, and instead of blowing your whistle to stop the play, call out from time to time and instill pep. If you wish you can have the men compete against each other without bringing the ball back to center. The team that makes the basket runs back on the defense; the opponents take possession of the ball under the basket and then try to work it up the court to their own basket. In this way you will keep the ball in play all the time, and you will find that it will furnish an excellent workout for your men.

Before your regular scrimmage work commences, throw out three or four balls to a group of fifteen men shooting at the same basket. It is so common to see a large group of men shooting at a basket with but one ball. One man takes

a shot, and later he returns the ball to a man cutting-in; he probably has to wait five minutes before getting another try for the basket. Keep your men busy by having them shoot before scrimmage. It is also advisable to have two foul shooters go off to one part of the court and practice fouls while the rest of the squad is shooting. Too many coaches depend upon one foul shooter to do all the shooting. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. As long as there are possibilities that a man will be put out of the game for committing four personal fouls, why not be prepared in case your regular foul shooter is expelled from the game? If you haven't another consistent foul shooter on the squad, develop one man. Have that man always leave the shooting



WARMING-UP FORMATION A.

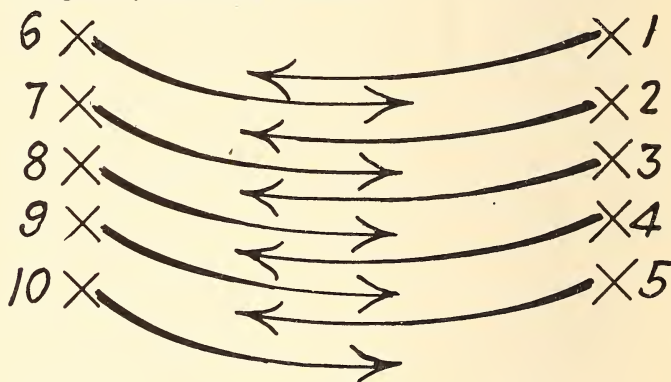
practice and go off to the side of the court to practise foul shooting with the regular man. If he puts enough time on it, he will unquestionably improve his shooting.

There are various formations used during the warm-up period which coaches can work advantageously. Below are several which I have used with the boys at City College for the past four years.

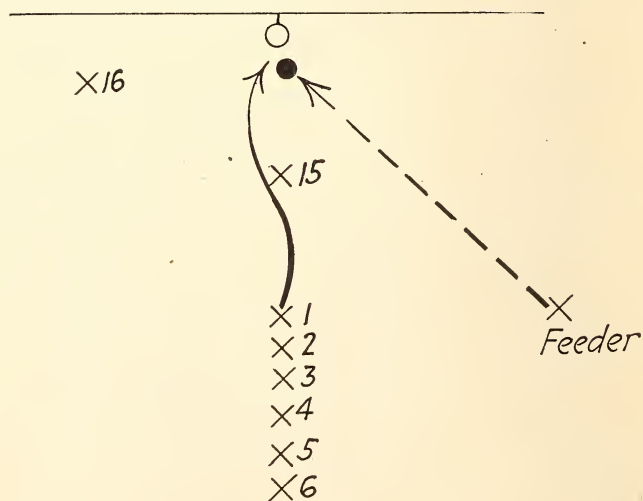
As 1 cuts in for the basket he receives a pass from 6 who follows right in to the basket to take the ball off the back-board; 1 swings over to the right side of the court directly in back of 10 while 6 passes the ball to 2 and moves on to the left side of the court directly in back of 5; both sides change with the movement of the play and continue that until they have had enough.



"B" is an excellent formation for use in getting men to pass the ball to one another without fumbling. Here 1 starts off on a dribble and when he is half way toward the opposite line, slips the ball to the stomach of 6; 6 turns sharply and repeats the same with 2; 2 repeats by slipping the ball to the pit of the stomach of 7, etc. Finally, when you come to the tail-end, 1 receives the ball from 5 and crosses over to his side. That completes the formation. Both teams then change sides. 10 should start the formation over again by dribbling towards 5.

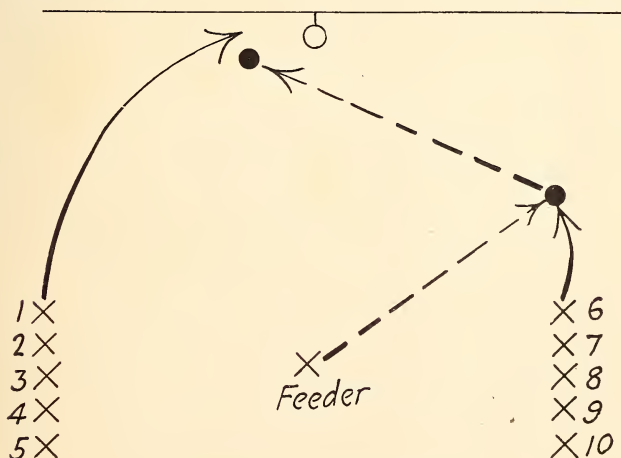


WARMING-UP FORMATION B.

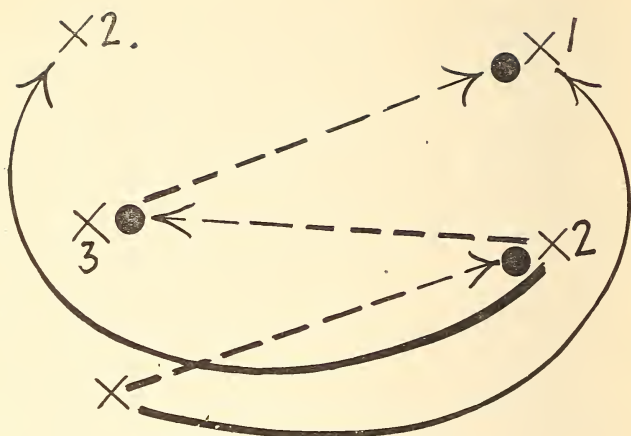


WARMING-UP FORMATION C.

"D" is another good formation to be used in teaching men on the squad how to catch a ball properly and pass it accurately to a mate who is cutting for the basket. The feeder passes the ball to 6 who starts for the basket; 6 immediately makes a pass to 1 who makes for the basket a second after 6 does; 6 takes the ball off the basket and throws it to 2; 6 swings over to the other side of the court and falls in back of 5 while 1 does the same and drops in back of 10. 2 this time passes the ball to 7 and follows it to take the ball off the backboard, etc., etc.



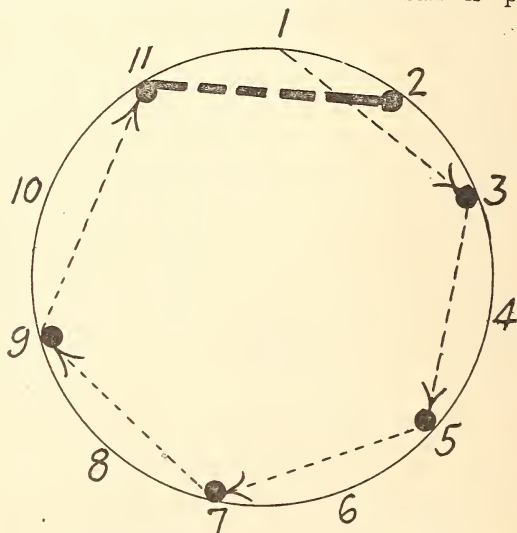
"E" is a criss-cross play in which the men successively run toward the ball and pass accurately to one another without fumbling. Here 1 begins with a dribble and slips the ball



CRISS-CROSS FORMATION E.

into the hands of 2 and continues on directly in back of him; 2 passes the ball to 3 and runs in back of 3; 3 continues the movement by passing the ball to 1 again. Have the players go up and down the floor two or three times and then let others try it.

"F" illustrates a formation which may be used profitably in developing good passing. It portrays an odd number of men in a circle formation. The ball is passed to



CIRCLE FORMATION FOR PASSING F.

alternate men, from 1 to 3, then 3 to 5, and so on from 11 to 2 so that the even-numbered men receive the ball on the next rotation. This is an excellent formation for developing accurate passing. Players can start with a one-hand pass; then change to a two-hand pass, an underhand pass with both hands, a chest pass, an overhead pass, and later vary with a bounce pass. They can then change the direction from right to left. By keeping two balls in motion at the same time there will be plenty of action and few men will be kept waiting for a pass. Great stress should be laid on getting the ball away quickly, emphasizing accuracy as the prime factor.

If finances permit, arrange to have two shirts, differently colored, for each player, and have them bring both shirts with them to the gymnasium whenever they have practice. If you desire to have one of the regulars play on the scrub team, it is not only uncomfortable but most unsanitary for him to change shirts with a scrub player. I would therefore insist that all men bring two shirts with them whenever they have practice and also at scheduled games.

Don't have your men stand around after scrimmage talking to friends. Urge them to take a shower and get dressed immediately lest they become stiff and catch cold.

Whenever he has a traveling game, the coach should see to it that the manager notifies the men who are to make the trip and gives them the exact time and place that the train leaves. It is also advisable to give each man a separate slip with the time of departure of several trains that leave for the town in which the game is to be played in case a member of the team should be late and miss his connections.

*At the Game.* I have found it a great help to have one of the assistant managers sit alongside of the men with a stop-watch and call out occasionally just how many more minutes there are to play. In this way, I am able to keep track of the time and make the necessary changes without taking risks.

A coach should point out the prominent mistakes made by the regulars in the game and make sure that each and every man on the bench hears him. I would also make a memorandum of these faults and present them to the players after the game.

*Suggestions to players for use during time-outs:*

1. Do not lie down on the floor.
2. Do not drink any water.
3. Do not put a wet sponge in your mouth.
4. Breathe in deeply through your nostrils and exhale through your mouth to restore wind.
5. Do not call one another down for making mistakes. Encourage your team-mates.
6. Change your signals if you think your opponents know them.
7. Before resuming play, plan the next two plays.

Before the game and during the halves, I have found it extremely helpful to point out faults that have been made by the regulars and to speak to each man individually so as to refresh his memory on the correction of those faults. Indirectly, the others listening to the conversation will benefit by the correction.

Before the game inspire your men with a good fiery talk. Make them feel that there is no such thing as defeat. Urge them to work together willingly regardless what the sacrifice may be, to play the game as gentlemen, without crabbing at the officials, and to abide by all decisions made.

Once you get the respect of your men you will find that your team will not go out to win games solely for their Alma Mater but will plug to the last to win for you. Work with them and try to please every man on the squad by giving him the individual attention that he may need. Do not play favorites with any man on the squad but sympathize, correct and show an impartial interest in the welfare of all.

There may be times when certain men on the squad will not be performing as well as you like them to, and it appears almost as though they cannot grasp the work. It is here that the coach's real power will come into play. Have patience with your men and remember that the fruits best worth waiting for ripen the slowest. A youngster is easily discouraged if you call him down, particularly in the presence of his mates.



To be capable of radiating steady patience, sympathy, and encouragement is proof not only of goodness of heart but of strength of mind. A coach is nothing less than a big brother to every man on the squad. There are times when certain men will go about their work with an air of indifference. They may be blue and despondent over the poor grades they received in their class work or because of troubles at home. The most valuable thing a coach can do is to be a real friend to these men. It may cost him time, energy, patience, convenience, and comfort, but it is all insignificant in cost when compared with the price coaches pay in trying to get their men to work harmoniously. Perfect cooperation and harmony amongst players, in attack and defense, are necessary to win games.

If defeats come, everything possible should be done to keep the players from becoming disheartened. No team will do its best unless the players go into a game with a full realization that they will have to put forth their very best efforts to stand any chance of winning. It is the absolute duty of a coach to build up confidence in the players under his direction. The coach should point out the faults in the team's play which caused the defeats in the previous games and show wherein correction of these faults will work vast improvement in their game. Frequently, a team may be greatly overconfident as a result of easy victories in former games. Teams going into a game with this spirit are in almost as poor a state of mind for their best interests as are those teams that are discouraged at the very start. Very often under such conditions, the unlooked for strength and determination of weaker opponents will so surprise, daze and demoralize a team, that disastrous defeats result when merely a change of spirit might have avoided them.

There are times when the coach will have to use tact in breaking up individualism on the part of the players. There are various types that he may have to deal with: the fellow who is anxious to lead the league in scoring and as a result breaks up team-work is one type; another is the fellow who is seeking a headline in the school or public newspaper and does all in his power to get it regardless of the cost to his team; a third is the type that will play favorites and pass the ball a majority of times to a certain mate while disregarding the man who is really deserving of the pass. The captain can help the coach out by calling attention to cases of certain men on the team who are not pulling well to-

gether off the court. The coach can then perhaps bring these men together better than the captain can.

From time to time, the coach will find that some of the men will show indifference to training rules. The importance of having players strictly adhere to the rules set down, cannot be over-emphasized in the early stages of the season. The coach should enforce these rules as laid down by him, even if it means the dropping of one of his regulars from the squad. There are some men who can dissipate and defy nature's laws for a while with apparent immunity. But late hours and excesses compel many a player to pay a heavy toll.

Many college and school teams are upset through the loss of regulars on account of ineligibility. I really feel that if a coach takes hold of his men individually from time to time, inquires about their progress in their school work, and if help is needed, seeks students who are proficient to give these athletes a hand, he can avoid disqualifications and build up team spirit.

It is the duty of the coach to give credit and praise wherever due. It is extremely annoying to see accounts in the daily press about those who star on the defense and who do the feeding. In football, the men in the backfield who do all the carrying of the ball receive credit for their ground-gaining while the men who are making the interference directly enabling these men to carry the ball often receive very little recognition. The best medium through whom they can receive commendation for their work is the coach, who recognizes ability better than the spectators in the stands or the newspaper reporters. A word of appreciation from the coach to these men will not only solidify his hold and increase his respect but will also make his players feel that their efforts have not gone unnoticed.

When teams go off on long trips, one will experience, as I have, that the men will play cards and gamble on a small scale. While there is nothing radically wrong in playing cards, I have observed that friendships have been broken, animosities have developed among players, team-work has been shattered, and a general lowering of the morale in the squad results. Get your men to pass the time in a more profitable way. A coach who can inspire his men to do bigger things, to better themselves mentally when they are off the court, is the type of man that boys need. Let the coach set the standard by reading a book so that the men

on the team will carry some form of reading matter with them on future trips.

Coaches should make it their business to keep Alumni, rooters, students, and gamblers out of the dressing room before the game and between halves. These men are all anxious to hand out advice which is never of value to the men. Besides, their presence is not conducive to the best spirit of the players and to the welfare of the team.

It is not by stature alone that you may know where the basketball heroes stand. It is by their spirit. A coach cannot in any way change the size of his men. If the players lack weight and power the coach has just that much handicap to overcome and should have more credit for developing a winning team. Yet, I do believe that a coach's personality, methods, and powers of inspiration have much to do with the spirit of his team. These are the coach's greatest assets, greater than the strategy he may teach. There may be certain individuals who will shine in spite of a poor coach; but you will notice, nevertheless, that a good coach always has good players. Some may think it luck or fate. It seems to me, however, that because of the nature of competition on the basketball courts today, a team must have a combination of a skilled coach and good players to finish well in the race. Wherever we find a great team and a great coach, we are most certain to find an almost indomitable spirit, which is due in no small measure to the coach. The respect which he gains from his players because of his superior knowledge of the game, and as a result of his methods of teaching and handling of the men under him, helps him personally and indirectly helps the team.

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